



rattapallax 11

[CD Included]

Centenary of Neruda

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Luisana Souza, Fy May Kaung, Cecilia Valada, Edelm
Torres, Iván García Valdés & Michelangelo Ruiz Ariza

Fela Kuti and AIDS

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Brazilian poets recorded at Estúdio Poetização Bora, São Paulo, Brazil. Engineered by Marcus Gramann.

Chilean poets recorded at Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile

WAVES EMPTY ON THE TONGUE

You might watch yourself go
to the grocery store, the post office
the beach treading, next,
a path of knobby pebbles.

You might endure
water, head-on to sand
crabs roaming, dew-dunks
eclipsing
glacial friction, loosed
ruins, winds fluming through
holes in the dark.

Understand this, that minnows,
though mere, waggle, thrash,
glint. Leave nothing behind
except small wakes.
Vibrate! Swim around.
Love your dog.

HERE AND THERE

The insect world is alive
and lively. Early evening.
I decide to sit on a tree's stump,
hunker on a rock to better watch
the goings on, but above a shroud
black bugs collide, dart
like atomic particles
harmless, so simple.
I cower, watch two ants
race across a branch long
detached and fiery with lichen.
A fly lands, opens and closes its wings
as if sighing, and moves on.
I look back. The ants have gone.
Now one bug leaptrop another.
So much to see I forget to listen
but later wind makes leaves rub
and later mill, terrifying, updrafts,
shocks of expectation, sharp
reports of rain.

Greenfield, ME

ISN'T IT ROMANTIC

In death
we each get our own
patina — not a halo
not yet. First
we go a ways.
Friends evoke us
in recognizable games
slightly glowing —
call up gods of Laughter and Lumps
in the throat. Whetted,
tales grow
warmer-funnier
counting days weeks months
odd, even years
while those who knew us
stay alive till
speech by speech
all drift,
as quiet.
Everything falls
silent.
Those who spoke us —
gone.
Over our skulls or ashes,
nothing comes.
We are forgotten.
Hard to imagine,
but there it is —
the crown.
Soft,
subtle sound.
Oh
as blinding

LSAL

After a long day in the fields
and the sun has set behind the shittah trees
and stars are quiet,
you lumber home trudging in your birthright,
the love of a woman, the laughter of a child,
the dancing your father might have arranged.

Oh if there isn't anyone to touch your hands and feet,
you might take up a book
with no impudence in the pages,
a willingness to seek such cures and ridges as you
have done,
so that the heart could rise a little
and might be tethered off.

Is not your birthright half an acre of this ground,
a postage to the distant realm of Ophir,
a tale wrought with supremacies,
the cry of its ecumenism,
a candle to be down with,
a law's against the night.

So that all your joys and dreams
will not be grief at your smooth brother,
pretending to your flesh, pretending to your blessing,
who has gone to marry Rachel,
winning blessing, woman, birthright,
and left you with this postage, this poem?

THE SEA SERPENT

From the depths to the shallows
It rises and slashes the placid surface with its wake
Whales will not challenge it.
Langueys will not feed on it.
It cranes and flails its primed neck and roams
at the moon.

Through the fog it spies another beam
And glides to shute on a current of its own making.
It prostrates itself before the lighthouse insurance
And worships the Eucharistic bascom.

It retreats in its solitude to the deep,
It craves an act of dolphins,
Counts the manta rays.
It happens upon a reef and believes the length of coral
To be another of itself. It dances a hopeful
coasting dance
Until it recognizes its insolence.

It is its only kind.

Many have named it.
Many have sworn to have seen it.
But the mermaid was a miniature draped in kelp,
And riging scylla, pearl of Odysseus, a squid.
But it knows it is no mere fiction.
By the wreckage of the caravels,
By the bodies warming its belly.
It knows it is no mere fiction.

It listens to the sky and hears thunder
Crash above its crested head.
It unleashes its dreadful bellow in reply.
To dare the sky and, thus, prove to the stars
That it is more than a legend
Or the hallucination of drunken sailors.

CC

CADA CASA CADA RATA
A CADA CASA CADA CARA
CADA CASA SACA DAR ATA
ACA DA CARA CASA RATA
RATA DATA ARA SACA
CASA TARA RASA SARA
OCASO ATAR ATA DA CADA
CASO TODA ATAR DATAR ARAR
DADA RARA TARA ROTA
ASCO COSA DA CATAR ATA
CASCADA CATARATA

NNN

nunca decir nunca
no negar
never nuncas on el nudo
notar que la nota anotada al notario de la noche
gato que ni siquiera notaba que nunca en la nota
negueaba
no queriendo querer
nada

nada navega negando
vengan las gomas a ganar el hudo
adán dona el dan nadando
dándonos de todo el don adorado

decir nunca decir
siempre decir
desdecir
desdecir el dragón
distante dentado
donado por el doble tono de la duda

CC

EACH HOUSE EACH MOUSE
TO EACH HOUSE EACH FACE
EACH HOUSE TAKE MAKE KNOT
HERE MAKE FACE HOUSE MOUSE
MOUSE FACTS BAKES TAKES
HOUSE TARE CLEAR CLAIRE
TAIRE KNOT KNOTS EACH MAKE
CASE WHOLE KNOT DATE RAKE
GIVEN RARE TARE ROTATE
GROSS CHOSE MAKE KNOT TASTE
CATARACT CASCAID

NNN

never say never
not negate
snow napes on the knot
notice that the note annotated to the notary of the night
drop that didn't want to notice that it never knoched
on the nap
not wanting to want
nothing

nothing navigates negating
avenge the urge to win the furry
adam donates the swimming give
going an addresses the adored gill

say never say
always say
unsay
unfold the dragon
dybuck dentate
domated by the double tone of doubt

DO

donde digan
 donde dudes
 los datos de la dífida
 d'ivo
 dilunda
 delicada dotada y desatada de dichas
 diceis duermo donde debes
 das la d'osa diferida
 desdeñado
 durmiente derogado
 distinguido
 domador depado
 distraído doble y emblemático
 espermático estrenado
 estrellas lo escena
 escalada escalabrosa
 encendida espuma eléctrica
 eclética esperada
 estancado espejismo espehuanito
 estridente ecotético y feliz furtivo
 fabuloso feroz furioso
 fragante fludo
 fluorescente y gigante giratorio

DD

where you say
 where you doubt
 the data of the gift
 d'ivo
 dilund
 delicate gifted and unhinged from good fortunes
 you say sleep where you should
 you give the deferred dose
 disend
 expedit sleeper
 distinguished
 doped tamer
 distracted double and emblematic
 released spermat
 you shatter the scene
 scabrous climb
 lit electric foam
 eclectic awaited
 stagnant horrifying mirage
 strident ecotetic and happy furtive
 fabulous fierce furious
 fragrant fluid
 fluorescent and gigantic revolving

From the book "O Guardador de Águas" (1991)

Fragment from the poem
 "Seis ou treze coisas que aprendi Sautinho"

12.

Que a palavra parede não seja símbolo
 de obstáculos à liberdade
 nem de desejos reprimidos
 nem de proibições na infância
 etc. (esses coisas que acham os
 reveladores de arcanos mentais)
 Não.
 Parede que me seduz é de tijolo, adube
 aplicado ao abdômen de uma casa.
 Eu tenho um gosto rasteiro de
 ir por reentrâncias
 beijar em rachaduras de paredes
 por frestas, por gretas — com lasciva de hera.
 Sobre o tijolo ser um tijolo cego.
 Tal um verme que flutua no ar.

From the book "Compêndio para Uso das
 Passaros" (1960)

UM NOVO JO

Porquanto
 Como conhecer as coisas sendo sendo-as?
 Jogo de Lâma

Desfrutado entre bichos
 raízes, barro e água
 o homem habitava
 sobre um montão de pedras.

Dentro de sua paisagem
 — entre ele e a pedra —
 crescia um caramujo.

12.

That the word wall not be a symbol
 of obstacles to freedom
 of repressed desires
 of childhood restrictions
 etcetera. These things the revealers
 find in the dissonances of mental arcanae;
 No.
 The wall that seduces me is made of tiles, adobe
 applied to the abdomen of a house.
 I have a crawling taste
 for going through re-entrances
 coming down into the cracks in walls
 through fissures, through crevices — lascivous as ivy
 To be the tile's blind lip.
 The worm that glows.

JOB, ANEW

Therefore
 How to know things if not by being them?
 Jogo de Lâma

Unfruct among creatures,
 roots, clay and water
 a man lived
 on a heap of stones.

Inside his landscape
 — between stone and himself —
 a mollusk grew.

Devem flor os musgos ...
Subiam até o lábio
depois centiam toda a boca
como se fosse uma tapeta.

Comércio de morte
e rã... A boca de rã
e água escuria barro ...

Bom era
sobre um pedregal lito
a limosa dormir!
Ao gume de uma adaga
tudo dar.

Bom era ser bicho
que rasteja nos pedras;
ser raiz de vegetal
ser água.

Bom era caminhar sem dono
na tarde
com pássaros em torno
e os ventos nas vestes amarelas.

Não ter nunca chegada
nunca aptar por nada.
Ir andando pequeno sob a chuva
torto como um pé de maçã.

Bom era entre botinas
trunchas pausar depois ...
como um cão
como um garfo esquecido na areia.

Ir a terra me recebendo
me agasalhando
me consumindo como um solo
um sapato
como um budo sem boca...

Mem flooded —
It swept up to my lips
ate around my mouth
leaving a ruined room

Coexistence of morte
and frog. ... A mouth of root
and water eating mud.

It was good
to sleep on a cold and stinky bed
of stones!
To leave everything
on the tip of a dagger.

It was good
to be a creature
that crawls across stones
to be vegetable root
to be water.

It was good to walk anonymous
in the afternoon
with birds around
and the wind in my yellow clothes.

To never have a place to go
To never choose anything.
To keep walking, small under the rain
twisted like an apple tree.

It was good to perch afterward
among worn boots
like a dog
like a fork forgotten in the sand.

The land receiving me
giving me shelter
using me like a stamp
a shoe
a support without a spout.

Ser como as coisas que não têm boca!
Comunicando-me apenas por infusão
por aderências
por intrusões ... Ser bicho, crianças,
folhas secas!

Ir criando azinhavos nos arrelhos
e carne enfiada
desfeita em flor de ave, verbúlos, ícones.
Minhas roupas como um reino de traças.

Bom era
ser como junco
se chão: seco e oco.
Cheio de ar. de formiga e sono.
Ser como pedra na sombra (almoço de musgos)
Ser como fruta na terra, entregue
aos objetos ...

To be like the things that have no mouth!
Communication only by infusion
by adherences
by intrusions ... To be crumens, children,
dry leaves!

To let the fungus grow between the toes.
The rusted flesh
bird, word, worm, unmade into flowers.
My clothes a kingdom of moths.

It was good
to be like a rush
long in the ground: dry and hollow.
Full of sand, ants, sleep.
To be stone under shade (a meal for mooses)
To be fruit in the ground, given away
to objects ...

THE BRICKLAYER'S ARMS

The bricklayer's arms are folded into a knot. They crest across a soft, crumpled body. The bricklayer's arms — stolid and serene — are out of joint with the quizzical expression on the bricklayer's face. The bricklayer's arms are heavy and slump into a wingback chair or threadbare sofa or petalant carousel or disorienting telescope. The bricklayer's arms are mohen, moided, mottled, morteced, mured in unclaimed histories of insufficient estimation. The bricklayer's arms float into suspended air, glow, from an inner right, in cascades of slate, bescoms of broken gutle. They are punched, poked, pummeled, pent; averse to what has been, oblivious to what will come. The bricklayer's arms disappear behind a cloud, then return soft-focus, dusk-fit, goaty, tipped. The bricklayer's arms refuse to tell the secret of the bricklayer's house. The bricklayer's arms abster exposure, encapsulate the brokened seams of a even dream, permissible to a few, particular to none. The bricklayer's arms count detachments, reflect closure.

The bricklayer's arms are themselves against denial, parry perfume, absorb abstraction. In the torn time between never and however, they dissolve into the formaldehyde of the heart's lost longing. The bricklayer's arms found a moment in the quicksilver of immaterial solids: perception as flight against clutter, hollow, evanescence. Falling into shadow, the bricklayer's arms, knees, neck, mouth, scalp, shins, stomach, eyes blend into storm, cloud, sand, crystal, fork, bend, bat, sag, sigh, coast. The bricklayer's arms are charms of a parallel coexistence, emblem of fused inaccessibility. They lie low in gummied silhouette, fly when flowered, sing in phrases to the apparent drumbeat of meticulous umbrication. Solo flight marked of bygone, tattered remnants, embers of demerode, the bricklayer's arms peel a dull and somber tone. The bricklayer's arms break the silence of the bricklayer's heart. The bricklayer's arms are every bit as dense as the vague

rust that obscures the furnished hold of the bricklayer's sight. The bricklayer's arms are the imperfect extension of the bricklayer's thoughts. No sea contains them, no forest is as deep or sly as boundless as the bounded continent of the bricklayer's arms. The bricklayer's arms signify nothing, but never cease to mean. Even the smallest grain of sand tunes itself to their contours. The bricklayer's arms are empirical evidence of the existence of the bricklayer's soul. The bricklayer's arms are lost in reverse's pale, sad, lush illusions, snap back from the blind eve or the quick retort to sail into helplessness's arid, paradise. The bricklayer's arms are a fragment of the imagination of the bricklayer's shoulders. Buoyed by incapacity, sufficient to expectation, they are the final destination of helpless promises and muted asperities. The bricklayer's arms are blanched in disavowal. Without preparation, the bricklayer's arms unfold the benched drives and mercurial generosity the age demands. Atlas of the forsaken mull

of final detours, harbinger of ill-timed hums and ill-torn weeps, the bricklayer's arms are stamped by the artifice of token and projection. The bricklayer's arms cradle the soul of the lost world

FALL ON ME

Browned the blocks and steel window frames roll up from the belly of their collapse. They resemble, fall at place. There it is so simply, easily, rendered and resolved. The bloom of flame is reabsorbed into the building. The fire vanishes. Thumb down tighter on the button. Pull the poisoned thumb of the plane's hooked arm. See the plane necked backward, off the screen. Away, unthought of. Unimagined. Thumb down tighter. The day burns backward. The towers lift their empty faces into the blue sky of the dawn.

Gerald Ryder rockets upward in the elevator, cradling a paper sack with coffee, light and sweet, a poppy seed muffin he shouldn't eat, should have brought home. From the other hand dangles a dordene breadcase containing Palm Pilot, cell phone, CD player he takes to the gym before work. Still a burn in his arms now, from the rowing machine, and he's still sweating lightly, through the oil-soaked cloth of his striped shirt. Half-blind to the other passengers in the lift, he needs to see or not he knows, not looking at them. Someone's talking, a pair of women, the dominant voice grating, and should I tell her if she's just going to let him get away with — Ryder shrugs it off, repeating his mantras, silently behind dulled eyes, we're going up up up up up we're going straight up to the top because this is the moment when the acceleration of the elevator gives that thought its power, and with that lightness, looseness underfoot and in his legs Ryder already thinks of the last bit of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory where the elevator blasts right out the top of the building and sails away into the wild blue; sometimes he wonders what a therapist would say to that if he was fool enough to waste the money or had the time to visit a therapist. Never happens. Now a lurch of the stomach and the lightness turns to his hand in the elevator slows and stops. The doors open. Ninety-ninth floor.

As he runs in, he shows his smart card to the scanner, the card that makes him findable anywhere in the building, since Gerald Ryder is just that important to the firm. Inge looks up at him, cool smile, neutral good receiving in her precise British accent, not bothering to mention his name. She's a Kratt, despite the accent, ridiculously good-looking, something like the Saint Pauli Girl on the bottle, but more sophisticated, finer-lined, and far less welcoming. Very much less welcoming. For the last week or so Ryder has been a little nervous of her, though Christ, she's only a receptionist — but she did appear soon after the whole company was brought out by the Krypton-Kratts, as Paul and Ryder like to call them for a joke, and maybe Inge listens to jokes like that, remembers them. One day Ryder was leaning over her station, showing her how to do some operation on the system, his left hand casually placed on her left shoulder, only because he was stooped forward, his winging over the keyboard, and needed to lean, it could have been. Though he put no weight on her shoulder. Her top had a flat round neck and his thumb and forefinger overlapped the cloth and registered the warmth of her skin. Also, her perfume is expensive as hell, more kind as Ryder's wife's is how he knows — one thumbful of cat-paw costs damn near as much as a Porsche. All the time he's explaining, instructing, supervising, no reason to make anything of the touch, but Inge straightens up, stiffened, beamed down on his hand — such a superhero laser glare that Ryder practically expected to draw back a smoking stump. He's been a little shy of her since then — no easy now-days to get strong up for sexual harassment, or what if she was a spy for Reagan/Gartner, even his mistress — who knew?

The light of sunset spills from the tall windows across the empty carpet, bathing the teak reception desk, Inge's loosely wired blond hair. Too much glare to check the view. He pads across the floor, glancing back once, for a quick unnoticed appreciation of her nicely turned calf, attractively trained in the straps of a high-heeled shoe.... Through to the back, he reaches his cubicle, sits down the briefcase on the floor, delving beside the cable kerchiefs, craps on the beam.

What up, Ger? says Paul, half rising to greet at him from two cubicles across. You tell me, says Ryder, as his screen lights up. Paul's been getting in here earlier, not stopping at the gym. The whine of a vacuum in the next room distracts him for a second. They're been building new workstations in there for most of the month. At least the construction part is done — no more hammering and sawing and drilling, just a handful of cleaning crew temps in there today. Ryder slings his coat over the back of his chair and sits down. The fold of his misdirection sends a spurt of acid into his esophagus. He unsnaps his coffee, the coffee won't help.

Timothy Thompson twists sideways in his seat, edging an inch or so out into the aisle. That puts his shoulder at risk of being clipped by the desk cart when it rolls by, but there's nothing to be done for it; he's got nowhere to go. No matter he, but he's been outpositioned by the outrageously overweight woman in the middle seat, enormous and complacent, her flesh billowing above and below the armrest, touching Thompson at all points, since he has no room to shrug away. Actually she's got the middle and the window seat both, but still somehow it's not enough for her.

Ridiculous. The flight's half-empty. How did he get himself stuck here? Somebody screwed up the seat assignments and packed everybody together in the front. As soon as the seatbelt sign goes off, he'll be able to get up and move. Just a few more minutes of misery. Even his flightmates are too long for this situation, with the seat in front reclined just a notch or two, now that the plane has finished the initial climb. He's a tall guy, Thompson; maybe he played high-school hoop, not quite good enough to start on his college team. Too tall for coach seats on these cheap airlines. Tall enough for first-class, definitely, but not rich enough, not yet. Well, frequent-flyer miles should take care of that, if he stays on this run. He's only like six seats back from the curtain to the first-class cabin.

He cranes around, checking the rest of the window padded at his area of the cabin. Across the aisle, a black dude with cornrows, man-on-man with a racing stripe works toward the fat lady, gives Thompson a sympathetic look. Dude is a better luck than Thompson, because his run-mates are a woman and a strong help, so there's nothing in the middle but a kid seat. And behind, a row of sour-faced Third World types, and in back of them, three starts to be plenty of empty seats. Soon enough he'll head back there.

Thompson leans forward, loosens his tie some more. Feels his feet beginning to swell, already. A flight attendant is creeping his way, leaning over to repeat the usual question, searching the answers on a notepad. As long as they don't roll out the cart, Thompson's outside shoulder is safe. So far so good. His eyes rest on the flight attendant while he considers orange juice, or go for the screwdriver? His meetings, what, eight hours away? He sees himself striding onto the building and up to the desk. T. Thompson, expected at four. He doesn't like to tell people Timmerly, though the

first name as printed on his card. Just eat it back to T. Kats made a joke of her name in grade school — Tim-Ten. Tim-Ten till he couldn't get that sing song out of his head

So maybe a screwdriver. A little early to be starving, though. Especially considering Yest Coast time. The girl is usually kind of cute. What is it, casual Tuesday for flight attendants? But Thompson likes the outfit — white blouse, short black skirt, or maybe it's a culotte, long pole legs, not great, not bad. What makes it is the shoes, the little black loafers with little white socks. Given the angle, Thompson's eyes naturally go there, he's got on sunglasses so no one's apt to notice how he's scooping her. Maybe the screwdriver, after all. The legs are kind of childish, actually, but maybe that's what makes it all work. Not much up top that he can see but works in the House. A wave of black hair falls over her collar. Her face is pretty, somehow a little small for the rest of her, small fine features, a little pinched, and older too — that face is over thirty for sure. Two little lines between eyebrows and nose are where her forehead started, ran before take-off. She's waiting for the Airbus to kick in. What's her name? You have to know her name. Thompson never will.

You've achieved Ryder, he's mild enough, his cufflinks, suspenders framing the start of the pouch that his groin tucks in is not quite enough to prevent, his addled shoes. Tall reasonable face-looking in forty-two, beginnings of a bald spot in his neat reddish hair, a few veins popped in the corner of his mouth, childlike not beginning to rise. You can see him, touch him, taste the acidity in the back of his throat. A swallow of coffee pushes it back; it's stranger when it returns. He's called his Palm Pilot into the desk-up, watches the colored numbers scrolling down the screen.

"Reddy," Paul says, passing behind his chair. (What color is his hair? his tie?) "Just totally red, you know?" and Ryder glances up at a not-very-happy half of a smile, then points his nose back to the screen. The market is not going up up like the Chronos Factory device. It is falling like a feather falls on a gusty day, when vagrant currents of the air wash it upward half the time, but one way or another it always ends up lower than it was. When to do? Excepting a few really crappy days, it's been a bull market for practically all of Ryder's adult life. So he's not sure. Go short. There's a movement to go short on a bunch of airline stocks and he's watching that, not sure if he ought to get with it or not.

Reversed, the jumpers all appear to fly. A flight of links shooting up the face of the tower, or no, a fountain of dark butterflies, with a few bright markings below their heads (from seductives fluttering in the eam). They hover before the mosaic honeycomb, to every call a life. A dozen lives. How are they to be murdered? Building toward brought isn't anything at all. All these souls started up on each other, unaware. Unconscious of each other, of what power holds them up. The exhausting force of concentration it takes to recreate their being, and all the while you must contend with recurring thoughts and images of the incident, increased fear and anxiety, difficulty in maintaining a daily routine, feelings of guilt, feelings of loss or grief, reluctance to express feelings, difficulty concentrating, problems with memory, emotional numbing, sense of helplessness, anger, irritability, hypervigilance, moodiness, increased sensitivity, depression, sadness, nightmares, sleep disruption, startled reactions, fatigue, low energy, social withdrawal, feelings of loss of control. Understand that these symptoms are normal. Limit your exposure to media coverage. Realize that it takes time to feel better. Be patient with the Airframe; it may take weeks for improvement to show.

By now, Tim Thompson has pretty well capitulated to the idea of the screwdriver. The girl is almost to him now. Just finishing up the row ahead. Of course, with the system there seem to be running so it'll be a while longer

before he actually gets the drink. And now that the decision is made, a whole lot of cells, receptors, whatever, have lined up to expect that first passage of me into metabolism. Thompson swallows his throat's gone dry. Here comes another delay: the Third Worlders are making a commotion, all getting up and blocking the aisle. Jeesh! Right again, but it doesn't seem to bother them. All four of them shouldering their way past the flight attendant, rude, the way those people so often are. Her face expresses the opinion ever so slightly as they thrust past her.

Do they all think they're going to get in the bathroom at once? So probably that's how they live in whatever miserable country they come from. But Thompson calls the last thought back. It's a pattern, he'll think ill of people, then repeat it. One of the three turns back toward him. Over the flight attendant's shoulder, Thompson gets a glimpse of his drawn and yellowish face — unbecomingly color. It's like the guy means to acknowledge Thompson's mental apology, but instead he lifts the wave of dark hair from her collar (which is something Thompson has idly thought it might be nice to do) and she who's her name? has only time to begin to register the authority of the unexpected touch, then the yellow-faced man with his other hand snags an invisible seam on her throat so that all the blood comes out.

Micheline, her head in a bandanna, bulb-shaped body zipped into a dark coverall, sponges cleaning fluids over the new-made cubicles, the odor crap in her nose. Jeannot is wiping sponges off the wallboard, and later vacuums vacuumed from freshly laid carpet, still fanning from glue. Micheline tastes glue on the roof of her mouth; her head when from it aches. She runs her sponge around the black plastic ring on the desk top through which the wires will be strung. The wires have not come yet, but when they do, the computers will be attached to them and the Americans will use the computers to pull electricity out of the walls and turn it into money. At Friday's end, three days from now or four days counting this one, Micheline will receive a fraction of this money transformed into a cheque, which she will convert into green dollars to be sealed in the red and gold envelopes she gets in Chumow, or hidden in the bones of tape cassettes, or slipped between the leaves of Jehovah's Witness tracts translated into Harina Koyed, then to be mailed to her six children in the care of her two sisters, who will live in the Carmelite convent of Port-au-Prince.

A tongue of sunlight leaks through the rain-high panes of glass at the lower end of the remodeled room. A blade of light lies on the floor. Else shines off the vacuum and protrudes himself on the carpet, hands outstretched in the direction of the van. In a low voice, he begins to utter long strings of strangled, wailing. Micheline and Jeannot also stop working, straighten up. They reach for their cups of weak, milky coffee, thick with sugar. Jeannot has the idea of missing a kick toward Else's somewhat comically upturned buttocks, to see if the gesture will make Micheline smile, but then he thinks that it is better not to mock.

"Li fen," he says to Micheline, *He's away, but his tone is tentative*. Micheline does smile, but distantly, over the steaming rim of her paper cup, her other hand preened at the itching scalp of her back.

"It is language he is speaking, maybe," Jeannot says, thinking of the trigonometric Videomax may enter when the drums have put them in possession of their spirits.

"No," said Micheline. "It is Arabic. Else learned this religion from the Arabs who came with the blue helmets in ninety-five."

"I remember them," Jeannot says with grin. "It was they who ate up all the goats." Micheline is talking about

the Palestinian soldiers who arrived among the U.N. forces who put an end to the Haitian *coup d'état* six years before. Certainly they had had access to a great many goats in the short time of their stay, because their religion did not allow them to eat pork. The Palestinian soldiers were strong in their religion, and they persuaded some few young Haitian men to join it. Jeannot remembers those days very well. He used to joke then that it was foolish to join a religion that forbade the eating of pork at a time when the population of goats had been almost abolished by the Palestinian soldiers, but of course there were few enough Haitians who could afford to eat any kind of meat.

"Well, maybe this religion strengthens his spirit," Jeannot says. "One ought to respect it."

"It is so," says Micheline, believing it, for when the knew Etzer in Carrefour he was disolute, with no order to his soul at all; he took whatever drugs leaked out of the huge transshipments from South America, and summed on his way to becoming a bandit, but now that he has this Muslim religion, he will not even drink a beer, but sits quietly at night in the corner of Micheline's room in Bushwick, turning the pages of the *Qur'an* under the cool glow of a flashlight. Now he too saves green dollars and sends his pretense to the family in Carrefour. Micheline, who has been here for nearly three years now, introduced him to the cleaning crew, where Jeannot had introduced her before. By the grace of God, the cleaning crew pays minimum wage, much better than the sweatshop money, although, regrettable, they also take out taxes.

As if her words had been his signal, Etzer bounces onto his feet. He is a tall young man, no longer so emaciated as he was in Haiti, though still very lean. As soon as he got money in America, he got his hair shaved into a high conical shape like the bow of a Caribbean cruise ship, which makes him appear still more tall and thin. He stands in the widening band of sunlight, smiling at the other two, a little self-consciously. The floor slams upward, or rather slaps, just a little, just for Micheline to receive in the soles of her feet. As if Etzer's movement has rocked the building, though that, of course, is impossible. It's only a slight distraction, like the very small earthquake shocks she has felt sometimes in Carrefour, but the others have felt it too, and for a moment there is fear in the room, an entity seizes from the threat of them. Four turns their eyes from one another, as it would do in the *coup d'état* time, if by some misfortune the machines should visit your house, for example.

"It's nothing," says Jeannot. And it is nothing. Nothing more comes. With a nod affirming what he's said, Jeannot goes back to wiping the walls. At first Micheline was terrified to climb to the heights of the towers. In the elevator, her heart would rise to fill her throat like a frightened dove trying to fly out a chimney. But since those first days she has had many jobs here. In all the world, she knows, there can be no building so mighty, and she feels no fear when she comes up now, only a kind of pride. The same quiet feeling moves among the three of them, as Etzer turns on the vacuum and Micheline picks up the squirt bottle and the sponge.

Abbas Abbar (Hanna hears his own voice overlapping with the other shouts *God is great*) as he pulls the box cutter left to right, across the soft neck of the infidel woman. The triangular cutting-point moves almost without resistance; it is new and razor-sharp, to prevent unnecessary pain as much as for efficiency. No cry but the shouted affirmation of Allah. His hands are wet. The woman relaxes into him, her legs collapsing, surrendering her

will to him. She is dead. Hanna is launched toward Paradise; there is no turning back. For this he was born; it has all been written. The infidel he faces, over the dark crown of the dead woman's hair, have not yet comprehended anything. One touches a blood spot from the lens of his glasses, then looks at his fingertip, undisturbed. The breath of the infidel has stopped. Only one, an infant, cries. The mother exposes her breast to quiet it. Hanna averts his gaze from the impure sight.

His eyes find the eyes of his brother Ahmed, who has reduced the male flight attendant, down in the tail of the plane. Then he glances over his shoulder they have control of the cockpit. Hanna takes a step backward. His heart inside flares vigorously, forces blood to every surface of his skin. The box cutter is a numb man-sequential chop in his right hand. He turns toward the first-class cabin, letting the woman fall in the aisle. Thompson's gaze is still fastened to her legs, his mind still attached to ideas which have now become irrelevant. He won't get his drink. He won't be able to change his seat. The flight attendant's face is turned to the side, hidden in a spill of hair. Her head has moved more freely than it should. Her pale limp legs remind Thompson of the limbs of a sleeping child. But she's not sleeping. Her blood has splashed over his shirt front, his glasses, his face, the fat lady next to him, who seems to be hyperventilating, more or less quietly, with a lurching rhythm. Thompson would like to do something to calm her, but he can't stop looking at the overturned black leathers, the little white socks, while Hanna is moving to block the passage to first class and the cockpit, turning to face the infidel passengers in crick, to oppose them in the case of need, though none have heart to rise. To hold himself calm he recites in silence, *Allah is the light of the heaven and the earth; the flames of his light is as a mirror wherein is a lamp; the lamp is a glass, the glass is a vessel of glory and light*; and Thompson's mind skitters across the rubble of his impressions, thinking there hasn't been a hijacking in the States for twenty years, longer, thinking statically (because Thompson is trained as an actuary: few hostages in hijackings are actually harmed, so the odds are good that he will be safe, that ninety-nine percent of them all will be safe, maybe as good as a hundred percent, once they have endured a period of discomfort, uncertainty, and fear. With that thought he has courage to take the small damp hand of the fat lady next to him: whose name might be, improbably, Crumbine, she may have flown this very morning from Portland down to Boston, enroute to L.A. for the birth of her first grandchild, given it, comfort it; the P.A. crackles and a clipped voice, begins to say *remain in your seats remain calm remain in your seats we are going back to the airport*. Thompson hears a very slight but unfamiliar accent, is that the pilot's voice from before? The black guy in the seat next wriggles in his seat, broadcasting a whizzing wild die-expression. Thompson is inspired to take his hand as well, reaching across the aisle to do so, and Hanna's adrenalin gushes upward when he sees this movement, though he does not twitch a hair; only his eyes move, and even that movement is slight. If the sheep were to charge, everything might be undone, but being sheep they will do no more than bleat, a few of them, as they go to the slaughter. Hanna looked down the length of the tube to meet the eyes of Ahmed again, imagining that Ahmed is also silently telling the words of the Sun of Light. Now Thompson would like to wipe the blood-sparkles from his glasses but his hands are engaged, and he does not want to relinquish his connection with those other lives, this compact unpurged now that the black guy has taken the free hand of the nursing mother beside him. In Thompson's mind the

more bothersome clip replaces the yellowish band pulling back, a sort of grey tap, like the tab of an untuned copper built into the flight attendant's neck. It doesn't seem to fit that such a small movement should have such a large result of blood and death, and it is a wrong result also; it's messing up his calculation. According to the calculation, they shouldn't get have killed anyone. They shouldn't have killed anyone at all. The hands press tighter; the screen swirls in Himmia's mind an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil will light, even if no fire touched it and his eye lingers on the nipple just relinquished for an instant by the infant's mouth, which somehow reminds him of the olive, the oil, the lamp within the glass and the glass within the stat, though he knows this chain of connection is wrong, and he must have no wrong thought when he is fifteen minutes from Paradise. Ten minutes. Under the blue scarf she wears over her hair, the eyes of the young mother rise toward Himmia, more calm than his own and amazingly clear and the trouble is there are too many such moments, and look how little you've accomplished — there are fifty-nine more people on this airplane and you must hold them all aloft at once, create them and sustain them with your mind. Children are particularly difficult; you know that certainly there are children old enough to be alarmed by what is happening, but it is difficult, painful, to pull them back, their faces, names, their distress and fear (these kinder feelings are the occasion of your pain), but maybe the children have been reassured by people who are thinking on Thompson thinks, and maybe it is better to leave the children a little vague and ill defined — you may simply comfort them while instead you concentrate on the mother and infant and the cycle of nursing that brings perfect comfort and reassurance to both and even has a little to spill over and be shared through the connecting hands of the black man with the crowns (what's his name?) with Thompson and his teammate. Allah guides his light to whom he will. And Allah strikes similes for us, and Allah has knowledge of everything. Five minutes.

End of the tape. The buildings have fallen. Islam has fallen. Afterward, days afterward, the structure somehow is still there, described in vapor. Men and women all transparent as if they'd just been poured in glass. The different paths of their descent described like contrails on the sky. In China a butterfly perturbs the air with an adjustment of its wings, and from the small unfolds the great. Even that almost invisible event this vision-devouring vortex has been born. In the days that follow, the images appear, a page or two here and there on a wall a face, a name, a line of description, the hair the clothes the occupations, the relationships with others, then there are maps, many more, till finally there are no walls at all but only a card castle built of all those sheets of paper which describe the names and faces of the lost, connecting with each other, depending on each other, beginning to exfoliate with the fractal logic of a fern, a crystal, a mountain or a coastline. From this exquisitely sensitive dependence on that so-delicate first condition, the towers will be reassembled, raised again where they once stood. You want to make yourself feel better. You want to make yourself fed. Your mind holds up the towers. Be patient with the Android: some weeks may pass before it takes effect. Be wary of obscure thoughts if you hadn't stepped on this crack or allowed yourself that small unseemly notion, all of it would somehow be prevented. Always in your mind the towers reappear.

Ryder is having trouble keeping his mind on the business. Now to the flickering, warring screen. How long ago did that begin? For a while, anyway, he's been more vulnerable to small distractions, while his diversion don't seem

to divert. The morning workout wears him out instead of energizing him. His marriage has been stale for a decade, it seems. The thing with anger — well, forget it. He barely sees his children. The screen keeps dipping out of focus. Ryder's been having some trouble with his eyes. *Ryder* was Paul's word. No doubt about it, middle age rears. Not that old age won't be severe —

He can just see the top of Paul's head across the partition wall. Does the guy know he's getting dandruff? When the alarm went off ten minutes ago, Paul never budged from his terminal. He was right, of course, since it was a hoax. False alarm, anyway. Ryder himself got no further than the mill in front of the elevator bank before the loud-speakers sent everybody back to work. What was the hoax? An airplane hit the north tower. It actually has happened in the past. Small planes — you'd think they'd see it, wouldn't you? Ryder had the impulse to keep going. Ride down the shaft, walk out the door and then? Who knows. . . A walk to Battery Park. A trip to Cambodia. Something. But he went back. Wouldn't do to get behind. Can be kept doing this for the rest of his life!

He's looking at the top of Paul's head, the flakes of dandruff in the black hair, thinking that Paul is always there when he arrives, and usually still there when he leaves, so Paul is probably up to something, plotting to get ahead of Ryder, edge him out. Oh, it perks to be thinking that way, when Ryder and Paul have been buds since pre-school, but still, it's probably true.

There's poppy seed crumbs all over his shirt, and the brown irregular splash of a coffee stain. That happened a few minutes before the alarm; the coffee just seemed to jump out of the cup. No sense to it. Actually, Ryder wonders if he's coming down with something. Now the colored bars on his screen resolve, and he remembers what the plane host used him think of: that short move in airline stocks. Let's look again, see where that's at. But now another distraction: whispering, snickering, and Ryder swears in his chair to see the cleaning crew coming out of the new room like some kind of a West Indian parade. The women in front, with her mop bucket riding on the top of her head, balanced on the crown of her yellow bandanna, and her empty hands flowing easily around her hips, like Ryder has seen with the old Chinese that do Tin Tin in Columbus Park. The two guys behind her are the ones snickering, but somehow they're also *multi-tasking*. Ryder's never looked at this woman before, and she's certainly nothing much to look at now, but there's something in the grace of her movement that makes him get up and follow.

Nothing more has happened, and Thompson is thinking that's good, that's good; another minute gone by with nothing bad happening, and another and another, and soon enough minutes will have piled up that the whole nerve-wracking experience will be behind him. Behind them. His hand still connects to the black guy across the aisle, who's dipped into the kind of slack-limbed relaxation Thompson has always envied is guys like that, the way they seem to switch themselves off, and be the window the crying lady has gone to sleep on the mother's breast, and the mother appears to be sleeping too or at any rate has her eyes closed and her head lolled to one side on the headrest. Everybody's got their own way of handling the stress. Behind him, people are making cell-phone calls and Thompson wishes they wouldn't do that because when it opens the hijackers, makes them do something. But they don't stop it. It doesn't seem to bother them. They said they were going back to the airport. Thompson feels somewhat anxious for

the plane to land already. When it has landed, they will all be safe, and the whole episode will be closer to its end. He gives the fat lady's hand a quick pressure. She's calmed down now, a good word down, the hyperventilation reduced to a breezy twitch in the loose skin of her throat. But when Thompson looks past her to the window he gets a real jolt — that was the Empire State Building going by, astonishingly close. Wasn't he fast, and Thompson doesn't know the New York skyline all that well. Still, it rattles him. What airport are they going back to? He looks up at Hanna, the only blinder he can see, and Hanna glances back to the open cockpit and sees Marwan and Fares are at the staggeringly complicated controls — every inch of the cockpit a dial or a switch — and feels a wash of love for them, the years of devotion and study and discipline that make what they are doing now possible *there* glorifying life, in the mornings and the evenings, are men whom neither summer nor buffeting deters from the remembrance of Allah and when Hanna turns back to face the coach section, Thompson drives from him the exasperation he was seeking, because Hanna is now the person in authority — not that Hanna under or needs to acknowledge Thompson in any way, yet Thompson distrusts from Hanna's calm posture that for Hanna everything is all right, and so it must be.

Ryder follows the parade out to the lobby, where Inge looks up to appreciate this spectacle — black women walking with a bucket on her head, and a voluble brook in the seamless monotony of Inge's morning. A plane's bucket of cleaning supplies — it ought to be absurd, but it's not, because the graceful concentrated ease with which the women bears it up organizes everything around her into harmony. It is as if she walks on air. Harmony is what's missing from Inge's life, she thinks as the two men clamour past, strutting, expiring behind the woman who leads them. Inge's life has become stupid, sold to this job where nothing matters but her looks and clothes and her cool manners. Sold for an absurd amount of money it is true but still, she's the dearest that she feels. It must be corrected. She will do something, certainly, perhaps return to university, and Ryder, at the end of the parade, not quite part of it, just shuffling along behind, catches Inge's eye and a whiff of her mood and thinks suddenly what if I apologise to her?

Then all this daily discomfort might end. There's a person inside her good looks, after all, and we could just be two people doing our jobs. There's a hint in the background, an increasing drone, and Michelle turns a little too sharply toward the sound, so that the bucket loosens from her head and she must raise one hand to steady it, and Ryder sees her eyes widen, whiten, and Ryder turns to see what she sees beyond the wall of windows. Remain as your sons remain when we are going back to the airport, and through this ought to be reuniting Thompson's heart has started beating TIM-TOM TIM-TOM so obstinately make it stop. Where's the airport? It must be none, though he can't see it, for the plane has lurched into a sideways sort of bank turn that foretells a rocky landing and now, finally some people are screaming. And as for the unbelievers, their words are as a surge on a spacious plain which the man above supposes to be water. All when he comes to it he finds it is nothing: there indeed he finds Allah, and He pays him his account as full — Hanna's tongue has gone thick in his throat, his excitement now so great that he has in clung to the bulkhead to hold himself up, he is thirty seconds from Paradise, for now, when he looks through the cockpit door between the dark heads of his beloved and beautiful Marwan and Fares, he can see the target the building the windows and the people standing behind the windows seeing the unbelievable spectacle of the jetliner rushing toward them. Ryder, Inge, Jeanette drive Michelle and

the (approximately) four thousand nine hundred and ninety-five others that your mind can't capture, compare or sustain. The mind of God is in all believers. Not in each but in all. The mind of God is in all believers. You know it to be true but somehow now today this instant the truth has been inverted, perverted, reversed. Something has gone wrong with what it means. It is too late, it can't be stopped. The plane has already entered the building. The fireball has already illuminated each body to the angles of its bones. Now they have all been revealed to each other. Hanna has no time to finally be proven. The word has already begun to wither, even it will release its load. No one of them will ever leave the moment where they all hover now. They are all to be fused together, forever

they are as shadows upon a sun obscure
screened by a fellow
above which is a fellow
above which are clouds,
shadows piled one upon another
when he puts forth his hand, we'll sigh he cannot see it.
And to a heaven where God assigns no light
no light has he.

Stop watching, stop watching the tape. Stop rewinding. Don't watch it again. Just let it stop. It was no slip of your attention that let the towers fall. It was the concentration of your thought that held them up there to begin with. Leave it to darkness and the grace of God, the exhaled breath of baby birds. You might have been looking; it wouldn't have helped. Nothing could have been prevented. But still you know that somehow something wasn't watching. Something let attention lapse, relaxing everything that follows, as the weight falls from the air. —

EDEN

In a perfect world, spanning adjacent
to this one, I name the animals,
divide day from night, etc. Enthralled,
I pronounce it good and then, complacent,
I rest, in firm control of my nascent
wonders. Don't wake me up. Why must all
creation be vexed by longing? I fall
again and again into desires sent
mightily to trouble my dreams, demanding
their own worlds, forests, mythical beasts
to tame. Yet over there, the rain has always
just ended, the garden keeps expanding
its boundaries, time's drip-drip has ceased
and fruit wants to be plucked. I may, someday.

BIRD WATCHING

—a segment over her's tale (with thanks to Marthe Espada)

Manolo sees the birds first
"los pajaros, los pajaros!"
he always sees them first
it's a dreamtime man
I have plans outside of these diatribes — he always says
so he's always watching the day

Good thing about California
the birds will always signal
the renegade crop-duster
drunk snoring pilot can't always wait
for the striking Mexican cockroaches
to get out before he showers pesticide
hellish rain
from a low-flying, demon-engine

most days drunk and angry
he can never drink enough to wash the olive hair
of his Mexican mother off his skin
can never drink enough to forget
the mother he never knew
on the taints of the children
his white father raised him around
"le cucaracha, le cucaracha —"

so now he sees the engine
making gambit of the little brown cockroaches

Most days they get to the bats just in time
except for that once that Jaime
looked up for too long
one side of his face still has the burn discoloration
one eye still blind and cloudy

the pickers scatter — some snicks and tocks
gathered up by instinct
others dropped in pans,
women keeping pace with their husbands' brothers' sons

The sound of the plane will scare
flocks of white egret up early enough
that if you see the sudden panicked flight
you have at least thirty seconds to get to the bats
unharmed
nature has already selected for industry

As one shroud — the birds undulate onto the air
bank left out of the path
of the thing with bigger wings
and death a light scarf — toward the hills.

Manolo is in full stride
by the time he finishes his plea
negrité face almost flushed with fear and heat
Jaime is picking up pace too
the memory of seeing pain reaching in his own good eye

all moving now as one
a flock of brown birds scampering for them and
broken wings unable to bank out of the way

but one small boy is falling
twelve years old — it is his first day in this field
his father Palacio, a serious, practical man
pulled him out of class that day
"¡mucho que aprender cosas nuevas son ..."
— you have to learn how to do this —
you might as well — he had told him

Palacio never looks up from his work
and the boy mimics him — seems to get this right
even though he would have preferred
to be in school today

they're learning quadrants, equations
and he is excited because he has already figured it out
his English is poor — so he is more interested
in the world of symbols and numbers and pictures
but he wants to make Papa proud too

Palacio stops and screaming reaches
a frantic hand back for his son
but they are flagging dangerously now
and the terrified pilot is laughing at the sport of it
two slow Mexican cockroaches
emerged out with the lights on
"le cucaracha, le cucaracha!"

Manolo refuses to be a picker anymore
spends his time finger-picking sad cantos
on his guitar — enamel cup-catching with a dull clatter
the drizzle of coins that will keep him in tequila
as workers go in and out of the cantenas

rancheros pass by and enter at him
"¡cayé cayé!" as they toss coins at his head
"¡en poco nombré la tierra no me va a alcanzar!"
— the rain won't catch me though

Palacio is a sky-watcher now — a dreamer
none of his other children will ever come to the fields
since his boy's skinny arms and chest burned
and he screamed for three days
but Palacio has daughters
so he's always looking at the sky "¡los pajaros, los pajaros!"
and Manolo isn't there anymore
so he is always first to see the birds

FAT PRIEST FACE

His English was bad, and he sat there looking at me with his fat priest face. My girl was there too, and she was crying. He good, my shiny white boy, she told me out in the street. He good. But he knew who we were there and why we had to hurry. It wasn't a big deal to me, but she was freaking out because her old man and her twin and her brothers would come after me with her inons. Let them try, I told her. And her mom was starting to catch on too. It was starting to show. It was the sixth month. But nobody talked about it or about me like if they didn't talk about the guano loco and the trouble he caused then we would just go away. Not a chance.

I told her if we had done like I had said in the first place, then we could have already taken care of it. But that made her cry. And it was way too late for that now. I told her that if we were going to do this, then we should go to city hall on Van Ness some afternoon. She didn't want to even talk about that. In her mind that wasn't even an option. We had to do it right by her God.

I knew how she never mentioned God when I met her at El Rio. We danced to some salsa, which wasn't really my thing. We sat in the back that was like a yard and drank cups of licate and studied on lines. It was hot in the bar and I was down to my tank top and the summer fog felt good on my shoulders and she was wearing a short flower dress and her legs were smooth. We talked about her job selling sunglasses at the mall. She asked about my green team and my hands and my rehabilitation. I told her some of the lesser things I did so she wouldn't be afraid.

She came home with me that night and just about every night after that for a month. I didn't know at then, but her parents were in Idaho bringing money to relatives. That's why she could get away with acting like a little gitona. I don't remember any talk about God when we were stuck to each other night after night with whatever didn't end up made her. I don't remember him being that important in the rear end of my T-shirt in the dirty bathroom at the 7-eleven off Ninth Street Way. But all of a sudden he was all that mattered. We couldn't go to a doctor I knew about in Redwood City because that would go against God. She couldn't stay with me because it was a sin. If we went to city hall, then it wouldn't be recognized by the church.

So the priest talked to her about me in Spanish and didn't want to look at me. Sitting at the big table in the big room of the big church, I felt like the small double blanco her mother said I was. He nodded toward me and said a couple things, and she held my hand and covered up the ink on my knuckles and said, No no no. He's not like that anymore. He asked me what I believed and she touched my leg where he couldn't see. We had rehearsed what to say. But he asked without looking at me, without looking in my eyes, he shuffled some papers around, and I hung on the big table with the side of my hand to get him to look at me, and she started to cry again. He finally dared look at me with his fat priest face, and it turned so red I thought it was going to pop.

But on the street now she wouldn't look at me. She called me chuco loco. She said, I thought you were going to be good. You said you were going to be good. It was raining. I dropped her off at her parents on Genesee Avenue and told her I'd call her later. She didn't say anything. I watched her start to run up the cement stairs. I took a short from the lock. [Daniel I kept under my seat and watched her, and I did pray to some ugly and private God for her to fall.] I looked at the image of my bad face in the car window and listened to the engine and the rain, and I asked Him if she could just fall down these stairs a little bit. Just a little . . .

Katarzyna Kucumala
ON THE OUTSKIRTS

a klack: crows nesting
and fluttering away
stirring crows to wing,
kicking up mud in flocks
against the house wall
on which hangs a poster
for a film: the house-wall
around whose corner a dog
hangs by the throat
its snowed-out throwing.
its snowed-out throwing
the film is from Warsaw
before spring.
mud in wet in wet wet.
no eyes for it.
my winter is longer than that world's
by an arm of rope.

FIRST PRIZE WINNER

Mohammed Albaw
WAR SEASON

The harvest season has arrived
A struggle begins
The women are restless
The workmen are gone
The people impoverished

They come to gather fruits
Which are overripe
The aroma of rotting melons
And the tainted grapes
They smell of some mass

The one full-grown fruits
That overabund thousands
All through the bleak winters
Have become bitter and vicious

The beautiful colors of
Red, sweet apples
Purple, juicy grapes
Green, auspicious strawberries
Have transformed

The lush, moist and newly-picked fruits
Sit on the cold floor
Black, hard and ugly
The scene is dark
The grapple has overcome the grain

SECOND PRIZE WINNER

LOST WAX CASTING

Perfect at the back of the pond, made, then,
she washes and washes her hair,
halfway between soiled and clean, stiff
with a honey-grown cast, darker than
the scum that smothers the pond
in summer and early fall.

She was getting ready to go out
when this strangeness caught her up
and changed her into a single thought.
It stopped the act, made it an act
with no exit, no curtain call
except for the light snowfall
that softened her upraised arms,
crowned her head,
turned her ankles white.

She'll never rise dripping from shore,
pick the long grass from her thighs,
feel the mud coating her toes.
She'll never grow old, never shiver
at night because her slowing heart
can't keep the body's heat and pulse,
never again know passion except
that of her sculptor, burned into her skin.

She came from nothing, formed
of softness, held by a two-part mold
and poured with molten flesh
to mend the work. A rough beauty,
she needed the master's touch,
his hands all over her still,
fingers hollowing grooves, tracing
her shadowy lines with his rods
stained yellow — stained by the warm body
he loved with, trying to render life.

IN FLORIDA

In Florida, when the wind is from the east,
There's bound to be a rainbow every day.
In Florida, in any kind of weather,
There's a billboard asking you to stay.

"All the amenities you ever dreamed of"

And so began my dream of Florida:
A billboard asking me to dream about
A rainbow and a shower from the east,
In a gated place that has, without a doubt,

"All the amenities you ever dreamed of"

The shower beats on tiled roofs, falls into
The green green lawns that spread along the ground,
And breaks the surface of an azure pool,
Disturbing the reflection that I've found

"All the amenities you ever dreamed of"

And when the close-in sun returns, there is
A rainbow so beautiful I want to shout,
But can't, inside the gates, in Florida,
Where billboards tell you what to dream about

"All the amenities you ever dreamed of"

And so it ends, with silence winding out
Between the eastern clouds like fishing line
At the end of the spool — violet late that feels
Away beneath a rainbow and a sign:

"All the amenities you ever dreamed of"

OPENING THE CABINET

In *Jellydile*, at the Minglewood hotel, hangs a huge perception portrait of Lincoln
and a tapestry both done in a trance. At the Inspiration Stamp, a concrete tree stump on
the words, we wait for managers. I had heard an account of a poet who went and how
the medium and she saw boxes all around her and the poet was in the process of moving.
One psychic sang all of her productions. They weren't recognizable tunes, but little
murmuring songs. The others (psychics) were freestyle just giving out impressions and
visions. One saw my grandchildren holding up my arms like I'm a preflighter, and said a
ten-year-old boy in spirit helps me teach young people. None of which I can disprove.

We went to the chapel for the laying on of hands where the organist played "Love
Me Tender," and we sat on chairs in the sanctuary while they moved their hands,
sometimes touching us and sometimes not, generating heat over our bodies.

We met a mother with two little blonde girls who had pictures of their spirit
guides drawn for \$100. The spirit guides were also blonde and wearing the same outfits
and they had bright rainbows surrounding their heads, the kind of halo you see in a old
picture of Christ — only in patches, not gold.

They did not allow photographs, so I can tell you that when Samson, a
paranormal poet, tried to film three mediums washing a cat, they froze until he put down
the camera. We watched a video of the history of the place that told how the psychics
owned their own houses but the church owned the land. So if any psychics misbehaved,
they would have to take their house and leave.

In the museum there were date writings, the medium puts a piece of chalk
or a pencil between two dates and somehow the spirits are able to write. The letters are
backward and almost like hieroglyphics. Maybe this is a transmission problem, like a bad
connection, since they are writing from the other side. However, I can read them with a
mirror even though my third eye is misaligned.

In our room at night, to our knowledge, no discernible psychic activity occurs,
but in our dreams something must be stirring.

9 YOUNG POETS FROM CHILE *edited by Rodrigo Reyes • Translated from the Spanish*

GUSTAVO BARRERA

Translated by Charles Jack Ward

EL ALMUERZO

En la mesa los invitados no deben mirarse
se recuerdan como fueron antes del accidente
tocarán temas que no pueden herirlos
y conversarán amablemente a su plato vacío

Durante el almuerzo nadie deberá inquietarse
el lo persona del lado pierde una mano
o simplemente muere producto de la gangrena
la moderación nos hace ser civilizados

Alrededor de la mesa los cuerpos
se ubicarán de menor a mayor
estado de decadencia
siempre tratando de no ser evidentes

Al momento de despedirse
los comensales recordarán
que todo tiene un final

LUNCH

At the table the guests shouldn't look at each other
they will recall how they were before the accident
they will touch upon topics that cannot wound them
and each will smile amiably at his or her empty plate

During lunch no one will trouble themselves
if the person at his or her side loses a hand
or simply dies as a result of gangrene
moderation is what makes us civilized

Around the table the bodies
will be arranged from least to greatest
state of decadence
aiming always not to be explicit

At the moment of departure
the fellow diners will recall
that everything must have its end

INFORME DE LABORATORIO

Día 1 — La arveja se hincha y comienza a parotear

Día 2 — La arveja se ahora una planta y comienza a emitir algunos sonidos

Día 3 — La arveja articula algunas palabras solo cuando es de noche y agua cuando no sabe qué decir

Día 4 — La planta nacida de la arveja ya forma oraciones y pregunta el por qué de las palabras

Día 5 — La planta es ahora un mamífero se ha desprendido de sus raíces y comienza a buscar un culpable

Día 6 — El ente nacido de la planta de arvejas recorre el laboratorio buscando un culpable

Día 7 — El ente muestra señales de agotamiento al finalizar el día se instala en un macetero y comienza a echar raíces

Día 8 — El ente se mueve como una planta y a lo largo del día va perdiendo la memoria

Día 9 — La planta se contrae hasta su condición original y pide agua cada dos minutos

Día 10 — La arveja ha vuelto a ser una arveja

LABORATORY REPORT

Day 1 — The pea swells and begins to spit

Day 2 — The pea is now a plant and begins to emit certain sounds

Day 3 — The pea articulates certain words even when it is night and water when it does not know what to say

Day 4 — The plant born of the pea already forms sentences and inquires why of the words

Day 5 — The plant is now a mammal it has detached itself from its roots and begins to search out a culprit

Day 6 — The entity born of the pea plant roams the laboratory searching out a culprit

Day 7 — The entity displays signs of exhaustion upon finishing the day it installs itself in a flower pot and begins to spread roots

Day 8 — The entity is a plant again and at the end of the day begins to lose its memory

Day 9 — The plant contracts into its original condition and requests water every two minutes

Day 10 — The pea has turned into a pea

NIGHT PATROL

Horror is the night patrol
 Silence is the night patrol.
 During the night patrol, the neighborhood's deserted,
 everyone's gone who knows where
 to sleep or hide or die.
 There's an odor of sweaty bodies in the streets, deserted
 Except for these lovers on the sidewalk corner
 which is a circle opening itself like lips or a bird's beak
 which the lovers suckle, offering up their stubborn young ones.
 They close into themselves, standing out in darkness
 like silver lumps at the bottom of a pit,
 they burn back to their organs or back to the warning
 they didn't read before, when it was written,
 nor did they ask or betray the color
 of the phantom that never flew on the beach, but kept its head down,
 nibbling on fish that washed ashore on fire or breathless or frozen
 yet there was one, well as the phantom's grasp, that had to offer its lips.
 That is when the lovers submerge.
 And that is when I am with you,
 from that which kills itself and runs forever.
 The night patrol finds lovers
 Silence is the night patrol.
 And at the end of these streets there's a round
 that stretches like blood or sinks in the mud
 like perfect dismal puddles of perfume from which I hide
 my laughter, although they're led by the sea and its desiccated routes
 that comes from the Other Side, where the air
 breathes itself or enters golden caves
 once filled with wind or voices or birds
 where strange people go to talk and crawl around and then leave.
 Ages and ages, never ending centuries of light
 pass through that horrendous hole which drowns in flesh
 contemplating forever in the light that breaks through the eyes of the steel
 and puchers its lips behind its mask,
 the horse passing quickly through the light,
 And he who saw comes forth from the alleys to tremble
 before a host of transgressors, for he understood in that light
 what they meant, he understood their looks
 and their loss.

II

A rose is a rose.
 Here, between the walls where they hear everything,
 And he, who hears, sees that a rose is a rose.
 Those that come out of city sewers, with eyes
 that glow like feline assassins, like gnats, like frightened animals,
 go through the night in stampedes or in sorrow or in golden fields,
 and at the moment when the ocean
 heaves a complaint or unbraids its currents,
 the others, who didn't see, listen to the snow's breathing.
 The snow knew that a rose is a rose.
 A feline glance, like you have when you escape if you escape
 and you make it, quickly escaping in the tide or in the air
 into the rise of luck, a rose that radiates like a star, you understand,
 into the fleeing stampede, through the hell of rapping doors, you that escape
 as silence falls, the only one to make it, you
 saw the tide in the snow, its softness and abstractions,
 without knowing what powers the sun
 that blazes on the exhausted figs that no one planted
 but grew like bushes, and twisted up there with the frightened deer
 You, escaping, gave lips with your hurry, your fleeing, your golden fever
 in the catacombs where the suicides slept,
 and you make it, coughing with commensuration,
 with the honey the wasps didn't take, returning,
 but you are also a more furiously galloping
 to enter blindly into the snow, to see or to smell or to graze,
 or as a fugitive, to read
 the symbols written in stone.
 A man that wouldn't flee, but found
 the oval that no one would enclose, trampled
 as you went trampled by or made a pact with
 the darkness, that same darkness
 that calcified on the cave walls into diamonds
 and felt like a bridge that no one crossed,
 feline diamonds, the form that form assumes.
 This subject's conception, which was nearly
 nothingness, or being, or the lyrics
 marked by cigarette tips,
 or you, who make it
 nevertheless, when the persecution begins
 A rose is a rose.

JAULA DEL PADRE

De todos los que comen de esta mesa
el único que vive de su fuego es el padre.
Ya no sé de dónde vienen estas piedras
ni tampoco conozco a quien las trajo,
pero aquí las comemos, pero aquí las masticamos.
Salvaje padre sorprendido en tu error,
enemigo colgado de mirada amarilla,
me refiero a tu casa quemada por los bárbaros,
me refiero a tu lecho marcado por un sudor,
me refiero a tu alma que sale a predicar a la calle
el domingo volcánico de los evangelios,
palabra medio ruta que amonesta al suburbio
coronado por la lengua de un ángel,
coronado por la lengua que has de obedecer,
al decímal que te dará la muerte.
Padre es silencio, aligeras el peso de tu voz,
el exacto calibre que arma tu vergüenza,
el botón de la rabia, el cristal de la sed
cuando el cáncer congela tu garganta
y te dejó elucinar en su hueso.
Padre furioso contra un sol de neón,
padre furioso contra un grito de fuego,
encerrado con la luz que no entiendes,
encerrado es la jaula del mal.
Perseguido por tus bestias de piedra
ofendes la raíz de los débiles.
Los muros hablan en lenguas de cascada.
Señalan la calle de abejas y restos de miel.
Bevan otros dioses, truen otra ley,
un tibio cacahual atado a la cithara.
Los hermanos se comen un perro,
el perro se come la cara de un hombre,
el hombre el excremento de un buey.
Bajo las montañas están tus hermanos
agotados en la legítima de su propia calce.
Este fuego es su fuego, y es mi fuego también,
este fuego es su hambre con las alas de monca.
Un hombre es como la cara de un hombre.
Yo, mi padre, al padre de mi padre.

CAGE OF THE FATHER

Of all those that eat at this table
the only one that lives off his own fire is the father.
I don't know where these stones come from,
nor do I know who they were brought for,
but here we eat them, here we chew them.
Savage father caught in your error,
fiery enemy of yellow glance,
I speak of your house burned by barbarians,
I speak of your bed, marked by a sweat,
I speak of your soul that preaches in the street
the volcanic Sunday of the Gospel,
half heretic word that powers the markets
crowned by an angel's tongue,
crowned by the tongue that you have to obey,
the decimal that will cause your death.
Father is silence, you choose the weight of your voice,
the exact caliber to arm your shame,
the core of rage, the crystal of thirst
when the cancer freezes your throat
and leaves you to hallucinate in its place.
Father furious against a neon sun,
father furious against a fiery cry,
locked in with the light you don't understand,
locked in the cage of evil,
pursued by your meat beasts
you offend the roots of the weak.
The walls are a dog,
the dog eats a man's face,
the man ate man's excrement,
Your brothers are under the blankets
conquered in the tear of their own heat.
This fire is their fire, and it's my fire too,
this fire is their hunger with flies wings.
A man eats the face of a man.
I, my father, my father's father.

RECADO PARA MI CABALLO

... como un mensaje del rojo del verano.
— Blasco Andreu

El se encenderán las praderas de la sangre
de sí es que del charco o de la fuente beberá tu
imagen reflejada.
Recuérdalos cuando tus ojos alumbren la caverna
de sus gargantas
y apáptate cuando el grillo se oscure por la entraña.

El si naces vivo de la muerte
y el acas la muerte y el silencio claman algo por
la boca.
Pídeles que abran las ventanas de salida
y de el sol es semental o ave.

ESCRITO EN BRAILLE

No hay lengua vendadora que tenga el centro intacto
En el odio, en el odio, en el odio. — César Vallejo

No es necesario recuperar los besos.
La boca es necesario recuperar
y la boca con sus dientes y sus lenguas
y sus filamentos que en otra boca dicen más
que boca, diente y lengua.

La mano y no el gesto hay que strapar
y tampoco el abrazo sino el cuerpo
y más sue la sed que nunca cabe dentro de la
propia carne
y más aún el hambre que siempre es poco por la
propia cara.

Así se gesto todo con razón
y la muerte sea esperado en nada acabado.
Así no sea necesario recuperar las palabras
cuando la voz sea necesario recuperar.

MESSAGE FOR MY HORSE

like a message the red of summer
Blasco Andreu

Tell me if they will light the meadows in your blood
will they fly from a pool or a fountain that they'll drink
your image.
Remember them when your eyes sparkle down the cavern
of their throats
and take pity when your cry runs through their bowels.

Tell me if you're born alive from death
and if death and silence cry out from a still mouth.
Ask them to open the fltering windows
and tell me if the sun is stallion or bird.

WRITTEN IN BRAILLE

There is no true to figure with its center intact
In its hate, in its hate, in its hate. — César Vallejo

It's not necessary to recover the kisses.
It's the mouth that needs recovering
and the mouth with its teeth and tongues
and filaments that in another mouth tells us more
than mouth, teeth, and tongue.

It's in the hand, not the gesture
and look not only an embrace, rather into a body
and certainly there that never sits well in its own flesh
even past the hunger which is always a prodder-beggar
of its own blood
and beyond hunger, always a beggar in its own blood.

Here it germinates under the light of reason
and hanging over life's edge with its bones ends
it is not necessary to recover the words
when the voice becomes a salvagable urgency.

MANO ARMADA

A una mujer se le hundecan las manos y camina
en círculos
las calles de Chile...
Lleva un arma envuelta en pañales, un no nato
que disemina espesas
y helas,
lleva temblando el gatillo en el cielo que la
acompaña
Cada latido de sus venas es un nuevo mantra,
un sumbido que cae a gotas
un segundo antes de la emboscada.
Una mujer matrajeta destella la pólvora de sus
mejillas,
su nombre encandila, son vituleros con el mismo
sumbido de gotas y helas,
luminarias que abren su cuerpo, su cama, su celda.

MANSIONES DE GUERRA

West Point, curiosa fauna en la exatitud del diapas,
impresiona el lucire, el perfecto corte de sus
medallas,
impresiona el despliegue, las sobras de su fortín.

(disparan desde lo alto desde la infinito desde
ojos animales)
(arcan, desde las profundidades de la tierra y
los océanos)
(construyen sus ciudades sobre templos ajenos)
(aullan desde sus mandonos, nuestros campos
minados.)

ARMED HAND

A woman's hands munden and she walks the streets of
Chile in circles,
she carries a scapon wrapped in diapers, an unborn
that scatters spores and
bullets,
bride the trigger trembling at the sky that accompanies her,
Each pulse of her veins is a new mantra, a buzz that
drops to its hands
and knees
a second before the ambush...
Our Lady of Bullets flashes the gun powder of her cheeks,
her name enchants, headlines with the same buzz of
drops and bullets;
luminaries that open her body, her bed, her cell

MANSIONS OF WAR

West Point, curious fauna in the accuracy of the diapas,
the lucire, the perfect cut of their medals impresses,
the diapas, the leftovers of their fort impressions...

(from above from the infinite they fire from animal eyes
they bark from the depths of the earth and the oceans)
(they construct their cities over foreign temples)
(they howl from their mandoms, our mine fields)

LA PIEDRA

Para Alejandra Pizarnik

Yo sé por qué te duela
straer con furia la piedra hasta los dientes
y arrojarla después como si nada
a la danza magnética donde acaba el milagro

Con el tiempo te has vuelto ciega
Encandilante los verbos
la incandescencia de los versos dolorosos
Te paralizaron las alimenes palabras
el susurro esquizofrénico de la naturaleza del hombre

Yo sé que tu lamenta no cesará jamás
porque tu hambre es mi hambre
y el pan que buscabas, ese pan se hizo carne
se hizo fuego imposible de llevarse a la boca

THE STONE

for Alejandra Pizarnik

I know why it hurts you
to drive the stone to your teeth in rage
and then throw it away as if it were nothing
into that magnetic dance where miracles end

With the years you've gone blind
from verbs that dazzled you
to the incandescent verse of pain
You were paralyzed by the venom of words
the schizoid whispers of human nature

I know your lamentation will never cease
because your hunger and mine are the same
and the bread you were seeking became flesh
became a fire your mouth could never swallow

EXECRACIÓN DE LA LUZ

Desde hoy vivirá bajo la tierra

Oh los pasos que arando con espigas, invocan al mundo
ahuyentan al mundo para invocarlo nuevamente
tan vano es como sostener al Misterio

Me despido de la lluvia, erin del viento

de la sal que se revuelca en las arenas
Mm, extrañaré las rocas retrocediendo hacia la playa
eterna huida de espuma y sangre
la sal sobre la lengua, en cardelo

Desde hoy vivirá bajo la tierra

dónde la salamandra teje su llama de coral
y una serpiente roja late en el corazón de un magma extraordinario

Invocando el nombre de las aguas remotas

vadearé los ríos que se abrazan
los diminutos ríos que se abrazan y se quedan abrazados
los diminutos ríos que conservan el pensamiento sin voz.

THE EXECRATION OF LIGHT

Starting tomorrow I'll live beneath the earth

Hear the steps I make in the thorns, the feet I invoke
ran from the feet to invoke it again
as useless as upholding the Mystery

I'll say goodbye to the rain, muse of wind

to the salt stirred up by the ocean
I'll miss the sands receding up onto the beaches
the eternal flight from foam and blood
the salt in the wound, and its erous

Starting tomorrow I'll live beneath the earth

where the salamander weaves its coral flame
and a red serpent beats in the heart of an awesome magma

Invoking the name of far away waters

I'll wander the rivers that embrace one another
the little rivers that embrace and remain in the arms of one another
the little rivers that hold the thoughts without voice.

MUCICIN

Leve y con gestos pequeños
se asoma la primavera a Nueva York
En la calle perforan la nieve
jacintos y tulipanes.
En los noticieros

brisa el día
el canto primero de la mezquita.
Una consonante oca,
una vocal abre la piagaria:

"El único, el
misericordioso,
orfebre de espaldas genéticas, el
que trae filigranas, que expande
trama al telar,
que hila, onhebra y corta la voz, al
que brinca en mi
el, que es otra, arena, parte
primera málala
alfabeto, silencio
quejido del load. El."

Desde el almiar, se cantan

unas a otras las sirenas antiaéreas.
Su canto va por cables y voces
ocultando los tejados de Bagdad.
El mucicín abre su boca a los astillitos,
al teatro de guerra montado en el televisor.

MUEZZIN

Slow gestures of spring wake the city.
Hiroscaths, tulips pierce
the sidewalk snow
in the news
day breaks
with the mosque's first canto
A consonant drops
a vowel opens to prayer:

"The only
the merciful
master of genes,
singer awake, who expands
and tightens the loom,
who spins, weaves, frames the voice, he
who sings in me
notes, word, poem?
fern trail
alphabet silence
moan of the load. He."

Like the call of sirens in a raid
minarets and nose to camera
the rooftops of Baghdad
The muezzin opens his mouth to satellites,
to the theater of war in my television.

CHIRPING CATHEDRALS

In adorno
In adornment
In this house you will find love
carmines, hydrangeas and archbishops
Yung by their wings,
from a thousand bed sheets of love
And in a tender fracture,
you'll find atoms binding
in the furnace of smelts
burnt to dust by a lightning
burnt by bolts of enlightenment
by a seraph
in a prayer extending like a serpent to heaven
in the love murmured by refrigerators
to the cathode
the anode
to the toy with no batteries in the backyard
to the clothesline with no laundry
to a city without its birds of steel
without the ending of winged creatures on cables
without lites or boulevard
on breaks making
in the whip of ecstasy
in the keywords of their own talk.
Their charm, nourished by a three-phase current,
glowing like the heart of loam
with twinkling sharp thorns,
men tubes and sacred fluids.
I am the temple, their trill,
The Cathedral of Mephisto.
In me Truth is confused

PERO SUCEDE I

Pero sucede que no hay niños por las calles
Pero sucede que los niños desaparecieron
Bajo la lluvia que cae en Budapest.

Pero esta ciudad no se llama Budapest
Porque no hay forma de salvarse en Budapest.
Porque no hay forma de amar en Budapest.
Porque hay niños que mueren y no hay nadie
Y hay mujeres que mueren y no hay nadie

Haec tēpē que nō hāy nādīe en Budapest.
Y los perros ocuparon el lugar de los niños
En esta ciudad que no es Budapest.

PERO SUCEDE II

Pero sucede que les dije a los niños de Budapest:
La muerte está de pie en los ascensores.
Cuidado con la muerte de pie en los ascensores.
Cuidado, cuidado con la muerte en Budapest.

Pero los niños no escucharon.
Pero los niños no quisieron escuchar.
Pero los niños corrieron por las calles
Bajo la lluvia y no quisieron escuchar.

Pero sucede que les dije a los niños en Budapest:
Tened mucho cuidado con los perros.

Pero los niños no escucharon
Pero los niños no quisieron escuchar

AS IT HAPPENS I

As it happens that the children are gone from the streets
As it happens that the children have disappeared
Beneath the rain that falls in Budapest.

But this city is not called Budapest
Because there is no way to save oneself in Budapest.
Because there is no way to love in Budapest.
Because there are children who die and there is no one
And there are women who die and there is no one

It's been a long time since there was anybody in
Budapest
And the dogs took the children's place
In this city that is not Budapest.

AS IT HAPPENS II

As it happens that I told the children of Budapest:
Death is running loose in the elevators.
Beware of wild death in the elevators
Beware, beware of death in Budapest

But the children did not listen
But the children would not listen.
But the children ran through the streets
Underneath the rain and would not listen.

And so it is that I told the children in Budapest:
Beware, be very careful, with the dogs

But the children did not listen.
But the children would not listen.

SOLO

Más sale que una lágrima
En el párpado
de un muerto.

ALONE

More alone than a tear
Along the eyelid
of a dead man.

CATARATAS

A mi Rosa, octogenario

Una lenteja de nata en el cristalino, ma Rosa,
pronto va a dejarte en penumbras. Trase por trase
se han marchado ya los colores, los perros de porcelana,
la cristalería oriental, los retratos, sobre todo los retratos
que a pesar de un obstinado pétalo en tu solapa de cofete
se han sumergido para siempre en el fondo blanco
de todos los retratos. De tu casa no quedan más que líneas,
claroscuros, dos o tres números en el reloj, retazos
que todavía retuyen por el borde inconfuso de tu coquera
con gran esfuerzo descifras la oreja de la taza y el reflejo
de las ampolletas en el té, ese leve movimiento apenas
percibido bajo la vuela de tus ojos, esquivando la nube
de mármol seco recubierta de cenizas, tus ojos fijos en mí
como una esfinge muda. El horizonte más hermoso
es arena bajo tus pies. El espejo, flectán que gire
en el desagüe. Mirar el sol fijamente, mirar la tierra.
Y todo torcido junto a mi rostro en las alas del té
¿Cómo temerle a la muerte si sólo se le ven los pñados?
Ma Rosa, nunca has visto mi rostro. Y ¿cómo serán
los rostros? ¿cómo serán las campanas? ¿cómo, dime,
cómo serán los arrugos? Si mundo es una piedra
que se come sobre el tiempo. Y mañana esa piedra
sellará la caverna aunque en algún grillo de resaca.
Y en verdad, qué importan los rostros, su ruido, si mañana
se oirá el gran ruido de la polevera catarata, ese ráfaga
de toros contra un muro de terciopelo. Tus aguas llegaron
al borde del precipicio. Y cuando caiga el último pétalo
de tu solapa y el último número del reloj, comenzará
la verdadera caída. Yo te sé. Yo estuve en Foz de Igazú.
Allí hay un lugar llamado La garganta del Diabolo.
Tu bello época será rucio de acero en Foz de Igazú.
Tus ojos harán un ruido como de enamorados en Foz de Igazú.
Panamá, la mariposa. En guaraní la coquera es muda.
Pero voya que ruge. Y así rugirá en tus ojos cada rincón de tu casa,
porque los años querrán mostrar su coqueta todos a la vez,
entrechacados en esa lenteja de nata, alumbrados
por el sol de tu pueblo natal. El tiempo va por caminos bifurcados
mientras que esperan nuestro cuchillo, nuestro arado ciego.
Pero en ti pronto comenzará la candadura caída.

Rugirá en la catarata la hojearse octogenario
de tu pobre álbum familiar, rugirán los pñales del Studio Italiano
atestados de beteleros, ma Rosa, las eternas uvas de merce,
el cielo surcado por los Halcónes de la FACH o ennegrecido
por el humo de la República puesta a rebuñar en los cuarteles,
mi propio ridículo caracol también rugirá, las abahicas del pesto,
el último extremo del Biograto, la mata de hortensias
que llevaba tu nombre, la gata siempre viva y sus tres colores,
los mismos tres colores del ruidoso tranvía donde vas
de sombrero y anteojos para el sol. Deja que todo
resuene en tus ojos, esa espuma negra, el barro bajo la nieve.
Y como la hora no llegará, cae tú también por la catarata,
ve a reunir los pétalos de tu retrato y cerrando los ojos
dijame escribir en el fondo tu nombre,
ma Rosa, con un vidrio sobre un muro de cal.

CATARACTS

To octogenarian ma Rosa

A milky film in your eye, Nana Rosa,
will soon leave you in shadow. But by then
your colors have subsided, as have the porcelain dogs,
the oriental glassware, portraits, above all the portraits
which in spite of a stubborn petal in your spinner's lapel
have sunk forever into the white background
of all portraits. From your house only lines remain,
claroscuros, two or three numbers on the clock, fragments
that you still must along the unfinished border of your blindness
with a great effort you manage to make out the cup handle or the reflection
of lightbulbs in your tea, that light movement scarcely
perceived under the sole of your eyes, avoiding the dry marble
cloud sprinkled with ashes, your eyes fixed on me
expressionless. The most beautiful horizon
is sand under your feet. The mirror, a fiction that swirls
in the sink. Stare at the sun, stare at the land
And everything twisted next to my face in the waves of the sea
How can you fear death if you only see its footprints?
Nana Rosa, you have power over my face. And what are
faces like? What are faces like? What, tell me,

are wrinkles like? The world is a stone
that shifts over time. And tomorrow that stone
will seal the cave even though the screams of the resurrected are heard
And really, what do faces matter, their sound, if tomorrow
you will hear the grand sound of the word *catarsis*, that sudden blast
of bulk against solvent. Your waters arrived
at the edge of the cliff. And when the last petal from your lipel falls
and the last number from your clock, the true fall
will begin. I know it. I was at Iguaçu Falls.
There is a place there called The Devil's Throat
Your belly *opaque* will be the misty mist at Iguaçu Falls
Your eyes will make a mist, like lovers at Iguaçu Falls
Remember, the barter. In Guaraní blindness is mine.
But let it rust. And now like that every corner of your house will rust,
because all the years will want to show their harvest all at once,
colliding in that milky film, let up
by the sun of your home town. Time moves along forked roads,
meanders that wear the cut, our blind ploughshare.
But is you the true fall will soon begin
The octogenarian rustling of your poor tumbé album will rust
in the extracts, the cinders of the Indian Club
filled with stone hate will rust, Nana Rosa, no less the eternal grapes of March,
the sky cut by auribula. An Ichor Falcon trailing colors in blackened
by the smoke of the República, turned to braying in the barracks,
my own ridiculous life hell will rust, too, the band in the post,
the last premiere at the movie house, the hotlanger bush
that carried your name, the immorelle car and its three colors,
the same three colors of the merry streets where you go
with your hat and your sunglasses. Let it all
ache in your eyes, that black foam, the mud beneath the snow
and since the hour will not arrive, tell also through the cataract,
go and gather together the petals of your portrait and upon closing your eyes
Nana Rosa, let me write your name with a fingertip
on the white wall you see

STEVE DALACHINSKY

THE BREAKAGE

ashes
a discolored bottle
sinking in early in the sunrise

still even dark at this hr
my murmur
crashing thru the porcelain danger

STAND CLEAR

i barely wake able to fill in the breakage natural rest uneasy in the break
my discolored sleep excited

DO NOT ENTER

pet where a pool sits formed like fine liquor famished not
this homesteader wave flag at culture's center tear plate

in break pg
with ink
condensation of invocations
a way in which the tincture condenses dries & cleans the future
thank you surgeries pharmaceutical washit wash

the smog of sound bleeds thru the listener's eyes arriving now as sun in mine
sharper than a whip lash bleeding thru the head like sound
my eyes only hearing the light the shape of the face
seeing only the mistakes of the flesh

statue of smoke above the river the backbones of young arbut
dwarfs my massive destruction

from bed to street to vehicle move north turn east move
north turn east

move north
turn harbor shot break lastcitywide it would seem
the prattle of children to school

& rise & wait for the light

to see the light move east turn north
then open the door

then o p e n the door

to morning.

now on 21 days in hell for 1/20002

ABOUT.....

about
kissing an
or
looking an

the long term or room about the idea of what it's all about
the wind carrying beetle would down the street

news clips
it beetle leaves clipped by winds aggressiveness

or pool when it's too you or against wind

about where a thing comes from a source hearing well
in front of this mesa sometimes its roots
deeper than a flowing
thing
any (flowing) thing

the veins in the leaf becoming what the leaf becomes

i.e. beetle
it itself crumbling, w/ the only a leaf can make sound as it crumbles
possibly long intervals but probably short

this short feels like paper when i crumple it about how it fit
crackle it less
dry frame it upside down of a thing

what performer beams weeps the sound of paper empty listeners
squeaky out of tune wall the music of fashion
about what embodies space what has hands whose body to inhabit

flow chart:
2 yrs.
12 approx. stretch
12 approx. stretch
2 gram
godfather walking out of to the office who gets it standard already set⁴

a long interval tho it may not be the same it perhaps you are fooled but
a brutal wind won't carry you even if you're weak.

PATTERNS IN A CHROMATIC FIELD

a far from
it is fair to say
it is
a far from
spoke too many shots

i lift a hand toward the beams
no fit into nor
that ps. of cloth that holds my mother's smile

held by scaffolding i walk thru hole held by silver of light
around a brick wilderness
in temporal sky of cloud it glows in heavenly blue on a mt of stone

across tarnished silver framed here within god's favor
held up
held on
held over
too many shots

shattered panes of ice along a street
that grow must end
nameless moments as temporal voices ask
where are you going?

581
575 606
475
608

SANCTU'S

some sit at my table
we are painted in this house of worship

slow moving
it is fair to say
even as the stars dwindle

O MAIOR ESPETÁCULO DA TERRA

nossa imensa capacidade
de fazer de natureza
mal, muito mais do que a mesma natureza
faz de nós e de si mesma
criando a física e o cinema
capos de chuva e cidades
poemas, pontes, sobrevoos
dentaduras, ruínas, aglomerações
religiões, canetas, multidões
unhas, luz, canções
e uma questão de treino

estranho
em princípio, e ser treinável
se a natureza cria apenas
o mínimo necessário

logo
o necessário, no mínimo:
porque, sem consciência
ciência ou projeto
desenha certo
por traços tortos

uma foca
não foi feita para brincar com bolas
futuras
nem um urso
para percorrer percursos curvos
de bicicleta
um homem para ser atleta
colacionador de selos ou poeta

porém um urso
tendo aprendido a fazer neve uso
o delicado
de cada enorme pato
depois de ser um urso
para ser um atleta?

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

our immense capacity
to make of nature
much, much more than nature itself
made of us and still
creating cinema and poems,
raincoats and cities,
bridges, deserts, poems,
dentures, benches, agglomerations,
religions, pens, religions,
dreams, movies, songs,
as a matter of training.

strange being trainable
(in principle)
if nature creates
but the necessary least

therefore
creates the necessary at least:
as without conscience
plan or science
It draws straight
with crooked lines

a seal
was not made to play
with balls to come
nor a bear
to run curving courses
on a bicycle
a man to be an athlete
philatelist or poet

moreover does a bear
having learned to make snow
and delicate use
of each enormous leg
stop being a bear
and become an athlete?

um urso numa bicicleta
difere de um urso na floresta
pela bicicleta, não pelo urso

que pode aprender ou usa
como um homem seu desenho

porém um urso
tendo-o feito
depois de sé-lo?

um urso delicadamente equilibrado
numa pequena bicicleta
é um poeta?

filho dos deuses
um homem que coleciona selos?

sequer o animal
especial que se quer
(sanctum sanctorum)
por criar a bicicleta
ou colecionar borboletas

se tudo fora feito
por longatexas tentativas
angustiantes erros
e alguma necessidade
como um urso ameaçado
pelo dor, o medo e o treinador

urso que apesar de tudo
eventualmente ainda cai
da mais bela bicicleta
sobre o chão duro

como cai no escuro
na ruína ou na barbárie
a civilização mais complexa

a bear on a bicycle differs
from a bear in the forest
because of the bicycle, not the bear

which can learn
its use as his design a man

and so does
a bear having done so
long as human?

as a bear delicately balanced
on a tiny bicycle
a bard!

a stamp collector
the son of gods!

not even the animal
who believes himself special
(sanctum sanctorum)
for creating bicycles
or collecting butterflies

if all be done
through endless effort
overwhelming errors
and some necessity
as a bear threatened
with pain, fear and trainer

a bear that in spite of all
eventually still falls
off the most beautiful bicycle
onto the hard floor

as fall into ruin
shadows or barbarism
the most complex civilization

DIZZING

The pattern leaps coming toward me, disappears at the corners, materializes in the center, expands.

When I married, it was for infinity. My fifth wife spins around me till she is invisible.

A line of children with the same first name come in the front door without knocking, climb out

through all the windows at once. The empty home closes around the next wife and me until the only space

left is the bed, the only way out of suffocation in the future. We conspire for the first, joyous time,

Until one day I am pulled out of the years and told: you are getting old, grow up, be down. But

the walls can't seem to hold onto the light. It leaps vanishing through the cracks

every day at the same time. Try again tomorrow, I hear a voice say out loud.

If it is mine, this must be my deathbed. I have no time. Everything will be familiar.

Grass can't help muzzing and drooping the next season to come along. Nothing

leaps still. I can't repeat that often enough. Nothing raves off my flesh like a breeze.

"HURRY UP, PLEASE, IT'S TIME."

unstoppable but all-possible time, all-lost time, except for bits and glimpses of time gone by (not of what's ahead), a few bits that move. Hurled pictographs, epics pared down to scenes, to stills, some elating, some frantic, some fated, some too dull to mention or even matter—all gone the instant we're out of time's stunning flows, its harsh puns, its charming, chaotic ciphers—no hurry as it, speed not part of the passing, its heartless, ubiquitous gathering, its seeming duplicitous scheming to take all, each last bit, all of it back, stuff it all, all in it, all of us.

tumbled together into the seamless such that something will throw into whatever flows, but never, no, in any hurry, all there—a patience beyond patience all thereon, stripped bare, at once and at last there—beyond care, anyone's care, any awareness, anyone there, nothing spared. Yes, take your time, yours to take, make of it what you will, before it spills, but please don't hurry—time's cue to me, to you

THE UNDISCOVERED PARENT: FELA KUTI'S BRILLIANT LEGACY

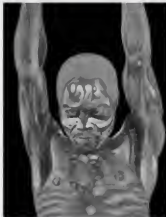
by Derek Bean

As I made my way up the winding streets of Quebec City a familiar beat kept the rhythm of the night. It was the second weekend of their annual summer music festival, a rather diverse gathering spread out over 10 days and four stages, featuring a spectacularly diverse roster of artists. Mostly geared toward folkie muso, Celtic rock and Quebecois (i.e. show-biz) homegrown fare, few could avoid the unmistakable polyrhythmic blend of horns, percussion and searing African guitar lines, all held together by some sort of magical sonic epoxy. Sixteen men known as Amibales converged on one small stage to preach the Nigerian gospel started some 40 years prior in a distant city once known as Eko. To-day it is called Lagos, historically embosomed in the land where Fela Anikulapo-Kuti ingeniously created Afro-beat.

As I made my way up the winding streets of Quebec City a familiar beat kept the rhythm of the night. It was the second weekend of their annual summer music festival, a rather diverse gathering spread out over 10 days and four stages, featuring a spectacularly diverse roster of artists. Mostly geared toward folkie muso, Celtic rock and Quebecois (i.e. show-biz) homegrown fare, few could avoid the unmistakable polyrhythmic blend of horns, percussion and searing African guitar lines, all held together by some sort of magical sonic epoxy. Sixteen men known as Amibales converged on one small stage to preach the Nigerian gospel started some 40 years prior in a distant city once known as Eko. To-day it is called Lagos, historically embosomed in the land where Fela Anikulapo-Kuti ingeniously created Afro-beat.

"Fela once described us as Art Music," says Amayo, lead singer of the traveling carnival Amibales Afrobeat Orchestra. "It's a classical form of African art, if you will. Its going to make its presence felt eventually in Carnegie Hall, if I've got something to do with it [laughs]." Amayo has much to do with it, in fact. After homing in 1990 when saxophonist Martin Perna wanted to further the legacy of Kuti's kingdom, the crew has become America's ambassadors of keeping this mix of highlife, jazz, funk, R & B soul, and traditional African and Yoruba music alive and well.

Amibales (which means "anti-bullets" in Spanish) is the touring band par excellence, sharing single



interpretations you'll witness live.

Before we continue heralding the translation, let's pay respect to the structure. The son of a preacher man and politically troublesome mother, Kuti's Yoruba upbringing offered him a strong sense of the sonic and spiritual. Born in 1938 in Abokuta, Nigeria, he would be warned toward a medical career, as his three siblings prior. Mapped to London at 20, he immediately enrolled in the Trinity School of Music to study a different sort of medicine. Five years later he returned to Nigeria with a vagabond troupe called Koola Lobitos, a steady African fixture on the UK scene. Fela (then known as Kanneke-Kuti) would resist the norm until moving the group to Los Angeles during the Biala War in 1968.

Summoned Fela Kanneke Kuti and Nigeria 70 (eventually Africa 70 and Egypt 80), the trumpet player/vocalist began tinkering with saxophones and piano. At the same time he was introduced to the writings of

Mahalia X and Eldridge (Harriet, and his mother's lifelong governmental dissent come into focus. Kati became more outspoken on the political routes of his homeland, soon returning home to set up his own commune to separate the affairs of his family, band and friends from that of Lagos. Calling it the Katsina Republic, he opened his own club, the Shrine (originally the Afro-Shrine), in the Tropic Hotel. In a still-much-circulated ceremony, Fela married 27 women at once and dubbed them with his new last name, Antikolapo: "He who carries death in his pouch." Kati, singing in Pidgin English — so all African siblings could understand — and Yoruba, the latter revealing the deep-seated spiritual tradition of his ancestral land, Fela used his growing status as entertainer to engage in politics.

Obviously this was not liked in the upper echelons. He would run for President twice. Both times physically beaten by political forces; in fact, the first would result in the destruction of the Katsina Republic when 1,000 government soldiers raided his compound, destroying master tapes and equipment, beating his entourage and subsequently killing his mother and wailing Kati. He would appear in court some 200 times before his death, the longest being a 27-month sentence of a five-year sentence for currency smuggling in 1984. Yet the more he was tortured, the stronger he became, and word of the next sovereign king spread all over Africa, regardless of official recognition. Until his 1997 death due to AIDS-related consequences (he estimated 1 million people attended his funeral), Kati reached prophet-like status.

"I personally tend to like the afro tempo and slower grooves because that's where you feel the hypnotic elements," Amun tells. "If you go too fast, you tend to miss the message. But in terms of an Afrobeat show, there needs to be room for the meditative, and hopefully people leave with new rejuvenation with whatever struggle they have."

I've witnessed this testament numerous times. Antibalas is a local fixture on the New York scene; they've carved a solid niche in the boroughs as the band that will sell out the venue each time you don't mind seeing them every week. In fact, every night if you're out for a

simply because you know you're going to dance. This sheer energy of it — or so, the number changes; musicians are undeniably powerful; if one or two are digging, there's plenty of ammo in reserve. From and center Antibalas is the ideal showman, a dominating figure with sweetly melodic, subtle and energetic dance routines. Without a microphone he's equally prominent on percussion, shakers, or whatever is available at the moment. And no matter who is in attendance he's aware of his beloved music's importance.

"In comparison to all the other conscious muses, this is the one that blends spiritual chants, the deep grooves you'll hear in reggae, the positive messages you'll also hear in reggae; it's connected and all comes together. It's the undiscovered parent of new music. It's old and new at the same time, and will eventually find its way to the popular masses."

Tough plight, but assumable. Recent projects like their cover of Willie Colón's "Che Che Cole" mask influences by vocalists Herbie Hancock here caused quite a stir as Antibalas cross-pollinates Latin sounds, but at root Afrobeat is ritual music, and their shows, as Kati's did, are an, and is, dancing. That is, there exists something outside of time in their time signatures, much like the meditative plains of Sub, Gnawa, Quenou and Vodoun ceremonies. The respective groups of Iranian, Moroccan, Pakistani and Haitian traditions are used in all-night ceremonies where musicians and audience alike fall into deep trance and enter states of consciousness not necessarily relevant to three-dimensional waves. They are soundscapes equated on American soil by Madonna, Tron, and, as well as the original intentions of Gospel, Blues and Jazz, the latter three also interpretations of African music. Afrobeat, for example, was the response of African slaves forced into Christianity. Broken and forced to believe in a space beyond the suffering of everyday life, in a world dominated by four-minute pop songs, there a little more to explore a 10-hour Gnawa ritual, where the sound of the sacred elements only's construction to free the

mind of the mind. That is, in yoga, terms, to step the constant influence of thought and insight in silence.

This is what made Kati so dangerous, the questioning of governed structures through ritual. As Amun would tell, "One of the main problems in pop culture... well, I wouldn't say it's a problem, but rather its purpose... is to stop you from thinking. It's a strategy to keep the masses unaware. If people develop a fast food mentality... I want something quick now!" They don't have 10 minutes to listen to a song. Fast food, fast music, everything fast so you have no time for your body to assimilate, all the nutrients because there are no nutrients [laughs]. That way of thinking and listening is what pop is about, and that is a shame because people are not aware because people are not allowed to be aware.

That allowance is a lot deeper than constant radio repetition of a few songs. It draws back to my very education, the way we're taught to accept "fundamentals," when even scientists know their craft is an art. As an artist, it is an interpretation of one surroundings which, just as differences between mountain and ocean life, is limitless. Fela Kati offered one more option that has spread worldwide, and continues to grow with efforts by bands like Antibalas. It is political and social, personal and individual, but after all the hype and hoopla, and the silence between, is the dance.

MCA did the world a huge favor in 2001 by re-releasing dozens of Kati concerts, re-creating the album art, photos and writing, now all digitally mastered. Scores after their re-release, songs like "Open and Close," "Ladi," "Excessive Still," "Shunkure" and "Lean Ko Ku (Chop 'n' Quench)" as an dance floor banger. For forgotten acts, the 2 CD *The Best Best of Fela Kati* is where to start. Fela had a penchant for not playing songs live after he recorded them — another reason he didn't find the deserved success in America, where audiences demand hearing "the hit" in concert — so this collection is a great place to hear him in prime studio shape.

What Antibalas started, others continue. Currently working on their new album, due out in May 2004 on Hope A-Hope Records, they continue tracing

extensively that show dance show antibalas.com. The Fela Project (fela-project.com), recently at the New Museum in SoHo, is a traveling exhibition of art and music inspired by the man, as well as original art of the scene. Numerous other Afrobeat bands and Kati masters (known Africa's "Vintageous Traveler" and Masters at Work's "MWC Experience: A Tribute to Fela") are to pop up all the time, and the *Real Kati's Best* (MCA) tribute album, featuring Jorge Ben Jor, Bamba Maad, Ter Malal, Les Nubians and possibly the greatest cover to date — see Fela Kati with D'Angelo, Macy Gray and R. Kelly Harmon doing "Water No Get Enemy" — is an incredible new translation to uncover.

Fela continues to be Fela plight, with his records, *Shunkure* and *Fight to Win*, as well as bridging the Afro-gay alongside Common, Mos Def and Rached Taha, keeping the gospel preached loud. Former Africa 70 band leader/drummer Tony Allen continues his own rhythmic mastery, playing alongside the likes of Sade, the Roots and dropping last year's gorgeous *Homocore* (Narada). Afrobeat in the context of hip-hop and R&B.

And we're barely scratching the surface. In an interview for *Artis* I did with former Antibalas Phil Bollen, two years back, he told me the very fact it men could tour together under such tight travel and financial conditions was political in itself. You get the feeling all these Fela related projects and shows repeat the sentiment: whether it's music or art and even genre finding value in the extended play of Kati's legacy. Amun certainly concurs, making the social as integrative as the scene.

"You can't separate politics from Afrobeat," he says. "It's not directing a political message, it has to have political overtones or undertones. This era is ripe for that, and it would be a shame if other people got into the music and don't do it. It would just be party music. We got into a debate the other day. Someone in Antibalas and I were not a political band, we're a party band." And I said, "Well, aren't political groups parties? You cannot let want to go out and party and forget the responsibility of an Afrobeat soldier is to constantly keep people aware and find new ways of addressing the same issues." □

DRUM

"If this is to be my fate ..."
he began, just days before
the ashen pallor, the rephers

of tacked air he'd crave,
but I started to dream the last
blades of his back as we sat

on the green sofa and gazed
out at the best-scented
blue hydrangeas — an ensing

primal melody, his lungs
beneath already desert
lakes, storm-flooded,

the long dormant now
sudden, unstoppable,
a teeming with life I imagined

pulpable there below each
fingerwheel. The gentlest
patter boomed like thunder,

and whatever words panned
toward those blue hydrangeas
only one of us could hear.

INTER

feeling at the moment only part of a greater atmosphere
and the loss of that atmosphere for days it was abandoned

at both much like I felt and feeling an even larger feeling
and it might have been the first time I truly felt a deep

inadequacy when all seemed to these people I chose to
place myself among and through a series of destinies

circumstances serendipitous and others more contrived
calculated with whatever portion of my being happened

to be reaching, meeting with everything I could want
to create this world and be among these people but a

question was always coming down to beauty and I
had no way of knowing if I was one bit beautiful or

if they were though I imagined this beauty to be not
an asset for those only of sight to contend with so

took it upon myself to thoroughly understand what
it was they saw as it was seen through the eyes of them

who for accounts and purposes may just as well be
blind escape free the perfect animal hardly gilded in their sole
sometimes silent, sometimes barking, signaling

PALMISTRY

I
don't be surprised if your lover has a murderous thirst, a vanity loop

I
seven o'clock Friday in traffic the driver falls asleep culturally defective but without a nod
appearing only to be stalled on feet in back of the bus and descending to sleep
his young head now seventy deeps twice on first mouse

thirty six and three quarter blocks away he is almost nabbed but warned next time you
will get a summons it is my observation distinct nothing in a broadway accent sounds
civil from two men in a single blue and white car in uniform

when he turns to me in my single minded get-up of mere practicality and wired patience
and knapsack, I tell him he glad you didn't get a summons thinking innocently enough
he must be pretty well-rested he says

over a time-span of half an hour scannabism is often easily appeased by two naps behind a bus

What could be inferred from a single-minded commitment,
to soothe the soul of a recently freed captive?

drawn to the net of freedom I paid to him the books of many mercies and the books of
many sorrows

2
It's Saturday, maybe
It's Saturday but beyond that I have to ask
what time is it?
how much does a stamp cost
what is my name
what is your name
what really happened
to whom did it happen
if it happened to me did I like it?
will it happen again or is it gone forever
do I have something for everyone

THE WEEK OF NIGHTS

Once there was a yellow fortress which stood on an island between the shores of a cold gray river running through an ancient city. In fact, it is there still. The walls of the fortress run straight down to the water and in the fortress are many empty rooms.

At the moment the river is swollen and turbulent; war has caused heavy rains, and many citizens are mournfully swimming. Among them is a woman in a red blouse — she is trying to hold a catfish in a lead cage at the end of a long stick above the flood. Another, younger woman in a blue cap is holding onto an inner tube with one hand and attempting, with the other, to paddle with a pot.

The river is cold and public.

Soldiers manning the fortress walls have been equipped with black rubber bows that are easy to draw, but their whited floppy arrows drop harmlessly from the bows.

The authorities are surveilling everyone.

In such a situation sleep is impossible.

Many women at the war began weeping to prevent in a feminine way, protesting out the absurdities of battle, the inadequacy of the battle plans, the laughable posturing of the weapons, the pathetic brevity of the outcomes of all events.

While demanding their right to eat, to peace, to rest, to dream, to sleep, they were forced to applaud as the warships retched the sea.

A dream may be a city without citizens, but it has a river to maintain.

In the end, the soldiers entered the beds of the women and turned over and over — or the women died, or the women turned men.

No one could interrupt this alone.

And yet it still wasn't sleep.

Isn't sleep fitted to this world?

Area's dreams a form of internal crucifixion?

Doesn't each dream catch a previous day of the world as an act of criticism?

Isn't this itself denoted / criticized by an expert?

Isn't sleep a form of qualified wakefulness?

I pump myself by completing mundane tasks

I pose before "the judge" re "the editor" has dogs leap out and I am immediately apologetic and willing to pay even more than the thing is worth

I leave a big tip which simply flaunts my empathy

Sentimental people wage war against numerous evils (and they count them)

The count might come out with 9 dead, 30 injured, and 100 sick, or there might be no one dead, but hundreds sick

People everywhere slip away leaving others behind who are ironic or militant

My empathies are banal, they are derivative and inconsequential

Their incongruity is itself an account, and as such it might serve as an accomplishment

But it exaggerates

I exaggerate

I see things every way without being sure just how bad things really are

No one learns secrets from another person's sleep

To catalogue affinities I'd call everyone

Janet with a deaf ear and Masha

and Violetta whose nestness takes up a lot of space and Ed

and Joanne who fears the sun and Mary Ann

and Josh and Franco if he'd ever speak up

and greataunt Pauline with only one hand

and the plumber Phil and Xaver the pump

and Sam in the fog arriving from the West and Lola cycling round

the world so small it quivers and comes to rest

after it falls from the hands of Newton the juggler

to the sound of drums.

The rhythms are so thick that hawks

and the voices of Mom and Gram are caught in it

and when Dad mimes his shadow spreads and when he swears his words

sound and are the same as the names of Umberto

and Zora and Declan and Maere but Juan is

going and so are Bonna and Sue and the warrior Malkam

under a parasol. I wouldn't slight Ead

though his proximity produces anxiety nor forget Mouron

whose museum bores forgetting as it would if she were

a dog.

Considerations occur in any catalogue

and changer championships: Rose

a gear on which one might only be a cog.

and Melochi Bulat, Cyprian Bette, Wang Len

Just after 5 pm at Blockbuster's there's a line of people waiting to rent tapes. I notice that the women, mostly included, are all exhibition narcissism in relationship to the place — taking a defensive stance and talking tough. We women are in league.

We know what we're in for and we're taking it on our own terms.

My children are grown, but I'm between two mothers (with whom I feel kinship) accompanied by children and the children are pushing at the situation. One little girl around 10 years old asks her mother if she can have her own Blockbuster card (she's just read the blue bulletin board offering a "bad fingerprint card") and her mother says she can, just as soon as she gets a job and can pay for it. The woman in line behind me tells her two children, "This is stupid, and where the car is is outside. You can make all the noise you want outside, and inside you be quiet."

I ask the 10-year-old what movies she likes

"Do you want names or kinds?" she asks.

She has a lot of coins wrapped in a red and green handkerchief and a couple of them fall out. A little boy picks them up for her. He asks, "Are you here alone?" and her mother turns around quickly "Oh," he says, "that's your mom."

We women at Blockbuster's remain suspicious. We're indulging other people's behavior — or we're indulging our own but we're making sure that no one thinks we're fooled.

The men in the place seem to be at ease, relaxed, unguarded and it's not only because the videos for rent at Blockbuster's are predominantly for male tastes.

At Blockbuster's men and women exhibit markedly different attitudes and the man seems to be in control. When I am there I participate in displacements in the context of control. The women in Blockbuster's seem to be asserting control — although the apparent target of their authority is often their children; meanwhile the men seem to want to "go for it," even when they are with children. There's a kind of abandon to men's selection of tapes — they are abandoning criteria, whereas the women keep their criteria to themselves. What they select or reject is nobody's business.

Their criteria have nothing to do with morality. They have something, however, to do with justification with the difficulty of justifying what they do.

"I'd rather deep than watch this," says the woman behind me.

I've reported nearly all that I've learned as long as I was reporting it

Once it reached a ditch

Another time light through small holes ran clear through a

I thought I had a toothache

Now people work harder than ever and the trains go up

People listen to music powerful enough to shatter stone but it falls silent

People — ah! to have students to pass on all that I've learned!

But they'd need to invent, add notes, replace all the lights.

Then, if all goes well, they'd earn money

BLACK TOPHAT JUSTIFIES LIKE A FLOWER

*Striking me hard the car hounds and flies
From the sound dome comes brittle strength
You fly across the paper wearing walls
I am where I am wide I take you in
The glow house has never been brighter
The car backs up and braces for the bathroom
You can't drag me there upon you drag me there
You look me in stride me hard bound and fly
White is the sky that backs and stumbles
Against the banner the room smokes and up
I take you though we have no center I take you
Looking at the platitudes of a neon afterbirth*

CONTRACTIONS

*Are you used to the silence
oh dead one or have you come
back to strum a note or oh
to beg the cathedral one last
bullet one last new name for
oh place one hand on your breast-
bone one on your sacrum bend
your nose to knee and say the
circle say the heave ho oh say
bloody boat on the vestibule
teabag bloated in the skull
are you used to the new new
oh fallow field in the east
oh rats to the pillow leave
ho with your spine in your
hand with your hand on your
throat and oh on the bloody boat
all of it adjust oh a flower*

*Are you start or stop or are
you stop and go oh start
where and when or the bird
on the vestibule or is it
you with your leg on your
wrist your hand on the stairs
a kind of prayer oh where
stammer and say oh where
is this mouth mine mouth
bullet fallen throat swollen
head to burst and a thorn
in the void which once was
rote and oh the field afresh
with (no not) fresh and callow
and oh oh are you borne
oh oh oh can you know
the bloody boat burst ashore
and your name echoes just so*

IT BEATS AS IT WOULD FALL
IN TWENTY PIECES

The instruments of my torture
had cut before me

Who are they, Collectively, individually, from
none to some

sporadic images flash behind
the screen.

Are you ready? No answer
Are you ready? The credit forever

third-personning against
the backdrop.

Dear king's underman nimbly into
the lyric

afterburner. Someone asks a question
and suddenly five people surround her with

deciphering looks.
What language do you speak?

Words batter against a window
Where are we? No answer

Where are we The guest room.
Welcome to
The Guest Room.

Feel free to ferment. Later, we'll take a ride
in the Submarine.

In case you haven't noticed.
It's a kind of home.
At work here.

Feeling better? No answer.

Laughter like the death throes
of a typewriter. Small light

Blinks on. Down we go. Blinks off.
The room

tighter now than skin.

THE FLOCK

Doors flung open on the hillside's
Outspread space where there are, unhurled
The powder of morning, the metaphor
Of haze and blue, the tickling
Like a response to the grand cortège
Of flat-bottomed clouds: the stuff,
A flock and its shepherd go off
At a pace which leads them out of sight
Towards a tune which is earned and even
In hare's eyes the truth
Draws near to lie in wait around them. Come closer.
Nothing's stopping you, one could envy them,
One forgets the fact that a sheep
Rarely dies of old age.

HOMILIES

A dream that the night was pounding on your door:
that would

hardly be more diverting than reading
one of those books in which anguish
is the fear that comes with childbirths. As for me,
she said

when I go to the theater, it's for the pleasure
of staircases and chandeliers, I don't like
mouthpieces, or the age when you think
decoration is instructive. It was on the terrace
at Chailot, barely forgotten but so hard
to grasp there you are, reduced to intangible
homilies, years later, but without having lost
a clerk-and-dagger tale. And two small girls
fight over who'll keep last month's calendar
page no I don't want the other one,
it's a chocolate! And how can you not
laugh at what's going on around you when a hand
even a bit chocolate-stained, clutches your sleeve.

SEPTEMBER

The black lump at the flank of dawn
how much longer will it hold out
with its débris in the backlit
reversé of words? There are so many other things
equally potent, more precise: the line
a voice is really aiming at
and it's more
than just song. Do you remember, we had been looking
through museum glass at the Sun King's navy,
his red galleon
and his gold on waves of pale cardboard
which etched themselves with the carmen's stories
wordless

except for those matches of beauty
sweet songs which you, surprising me,
had sung. Then we'd walked
in the disguised September weather
through the Tuileries, where fish swam up hunting for
crumbs
and their pond is still a light heart's landmark.

"Heave-ho,
here's a benêt"

you said, smoothing down your skirt
"that will stiffen the marks." Your face
was all smiles. "That's cradition, sir. Give me
your hand, we'll go drink some hot chocolate
at my place, and don't worry, as for passion
and its metaphors, you'll have all you like, but after
what I want."

TREES

The mistle which had such faith
In full odds
That it festooned them with hanged men.

He who gazes at trees
Sometimes has the cold indifference
Of a fox who stares at the crown
Until one drops to him
Protes, right on his snout.

AXIS MUNDI

Looking like a goblin, angel, which he was,
with white limestone powder in his hair,
he stepped with a cigarette after work
out of his dusty sculptor's studio,
the wind vacuuming his coat.

Still thinking of the Axis mundi —
the round cut even blood growing
out of the floor of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher,
which he had seen in Jerusalem —
he walked across the snowed-in parking in Lynn
and fired his battered Subaru from under the snow,
his freezing hands beginning to thaw.

It was evening now and jackdaws.
He slowly drove along the seashore, where
fishing the other end of the Axis
made a lot more sense somehow — and there it was,
black as the lower part of an ancient lamp-post
next to a sleepy policeman.

GOGOL IN NEW YORK

for Philip

Afraid of the cthonia: dragons of his dreams,
he takes a two-horse carriage in Central Park
to go to Brooklyn to a gourmet street
recommended by a friend in St. Petersburg.
After two hours of circling around the Park,
the carriage returns to where it started.
Surprised and angry, Gogol shuffles a deck of dollars.

He appreciates the New Yorkers though. Young men
and looking like men, and young women
also looking like men. He likes
Buddhist monks for their saffron robes,
Catholic clergymen for their white collars
and black cassocks. Naval officers
in their white uniforms and blue service caps
make him nervous and happy.

He sympathizes with the local population
while allowing his way through Harlem,
still hoping to reach that famous deli.
He stops to buy a bit of olive oil from Eileen,
quenching his thirst for better Russian lemonade.
He dwells on nostalgia, his pride of conscience.
He still has nostalgia, his pride of conscience.
He is still hungry, listens to the music
in his intestines and turns most decisive
about making it to Brooklyn.

At 11 p.m. Gogol folds his black umbrella.
Manhattan is still around him.
He devours clams at an Italian restaurant
and washes them down with white wine.
It's getting dark and cold outside,
but the darker the street, the lighter the skies above it.
Also, everybody speaks English here.
He knew that people spoke English in New York,
but not to this extent. He is mesmerized by the fact.
He needs someone to talk to at this hour.
He needs a Russian at this point in life.
Perhaps he'll find one or two in Brooklyn,
if only he could find his way there somehow.

APARTMENT 75

The three women who used to wake up
our whole house by starting her Subaru at 5 a.m.
has committed suicide. Snow
hangs like a set of unsundered sheets
on the windows. When I walked into
her seventh floor studio, the standard lamp
was still on, but could only light itself,
refusing to interfere with the dull dusk
of the interior the police had already searched.

For the first time, I felt an urge to look at her face
and perhaps to see something more distinctly
than the irregularity of neighborhood permits
and the emptiness of suicide allows,
but her features were shut down without offense.
I remember only a chair among its rear legs,
shoved up against the wall for balance.

BLACK AND WHITE

Twice a year — right before my birthday
and on Christmas Eve — I climb on a chair,
find a dusty Adidas shoebox from a shelf
and lay out ancient black-and-white photos
from Ramon on the dinner table,
noticing that the glossy paper
has collected some dust in the corners.

One day, in the past, my 2012,
I'll be spreading this ritual salute
over a blood-soaked cloth, and my teenage daughter
will scream out of her room, hand in earphones,
look at the collection and ask with taken-for-granted curiosity,
"How do you get them to be black and white like that?"

WINTER IN A BEACH TOWN

Like a bunch of gossip sharing secrets,
The storm-born tangle of lobster traps
Conspires on the sand, a split-second
Mirage, just as happy and at home here
As truth. Drapery the dunes, no barriers
Survive long on the wide and open beach.

Our prodigal daughter returns to the beach,
Committing acts she'd like to keep a secret.
We mean to save her, not to bury her.
With gossip; she thinks our talk's a mousetrap.
Meant to snare her. Her childhood still lives here.
By the waves' umbrellas, grandparents and second

Cousins in endless summers, split-seconds
Of innocence still dazzling the beach,
Old stories — that dead whale that washed up here —
Illustrating death, the grown-ups' secret.
Her awful smile a mesmerizing trap,
Until the town bulldozed and buried her.

But sand shifts, a crystalline barrier
That's born to break apart. In just one second,
That whale could be released from her damp trap.
Her bones could rise and decorate the beach
With curves and knobs and every secret.
I've wished that this would happen while I'm here,

Out on the sand, and our daughter could hear
Of it, see how useless to bury our
Todays or yesterdays in sand. Sevens
Migrate like ash, prefer the clamps of second
Hands. Potemkin washes up upon the beach.
A glove, a ring, a bit of glass, trappings

Of lives thrown overboard or lost, trappings
That ring to those of us who wish to hear
Of others. Waves advance the news, the beach
Grass whispers, hines, wind turns barriers
To conduits to give itself a second
Chance, and the sea disgorges her old secrets

in tangled traps, the barriers that bond us.
Here, the second hands pass news on, each to each,
Because there are no secrets on the beach

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THE BURROUGHS PROJECT

There is nothing you stop the power of a real dream. I mean this literally.

—William S. Burroughs

In spite of my complete and unbridged dedication, the Burroughs Project is still well behind schedule; a strange electric fantasy so near to being real I can almost feel its pulse. But I remain perpetually shimmering, living along the road to perfection like an asshole waiting to be penetrated by grates. Not to mention that I can't find anyone willing to take him for a test fuck, which is more than a bit discouraging.

At present the automaton project is nearly complete, the inner mechanisms at least, the robotics. Unfortunately the Old Bull Bellows, a wonder of cybernetic invention, is yet to receive a preliminary work-out. People keep asking me, "Why don't you fuck the Burroughs robot?" My answer has always been that I intend to. Make no mistake, I seriously want the opportunity to taste the fruit of my new technological marvel, though during the initial tests I will be too busy monitoring the diagnostics to actually do the fucking myself. People must understand, the original Burroughs, for all his brilliance, was completely unmoded compared to this new version. At no point did the original William S. Burroughs have an internal Orgone Energy Accumulator or Vagid Nerve Acceptor, artificial brainware hardware to usurp the Ugly Spirit and channel it into famous creative outlets. The replica will simulate and transcend these forms of depravity in an hour than the original could after five years in Tangier.

Though don't think the Burroughs Project is all about drugs and perverse sex. What our most reader is that these extremes are simply time-tested modes of metaphorical exploration. The Burroughs of the Future has a brilliance quotient of more than five hundred, and how his genius will manifest itself we are not yet capable of knowing. However, when he is complete, I am doubtless he will be a slug to the contemporary lit world's pretty face, and teach all the coffee house laptop using posers a thing or two about character.

Regarding character, recent magazine articles have suggested that the project's delay has something to do with competition from the Swedish group at work on the Gregory Corso automaton. My reaction is an outright no! Firstly, the Corso automaton isn't even a life-size model. It's a toy marketed to children and will fit comfortably inside a shoebox. For Christ's sake, it doesn't even have working genitals! Pull a string from his back to get the doll to talk, and sooner than it he has become belligerent and profane. I've heard that it's quite an uncomfortable spectacle. No, I welcome competition, but clearly the Swedes and I are two very distant realms.

In fact, the reason for the recent slowdown is one of a deeply personal nature. I had hoped to keep my private affairs private, but I realize, due to growing public pressure, that privacy is impossible.

Much has been made in the press about my relationship with Lana Dornier. What I intended to keep secret is that six months ago Lana and I separated and she asked me to move out of her home in East Hampton, which I did. As a result, work on the Burroughs Project was halted until I could move the laboratory out of Lana's basement and into my friend Darryl's apartment in Queens. Within weeks of my breaking the project was again moving forward; however, due to limited space in Darryl's loft, coupled with my inability to get any useful sleep on his couch, my emotional stress became quite literally paralyzing, and the rate of progress subsequent to this has been considerably retarded.

Of course, I accept full responsibility for the postponement of the project. It was my idea to break off my relationship with Lana. At the time I was convinced that I needed complete dedication to Burroughs.

But what a shambles it's been lately!

I haven't even mentioned my problems with ash. We have about a ton of opium in the laboratory for use in regulating the automaton's metabolism, but since I split from Lana I've been taking it in my office. My productivity's been cut in half. I have no appetite. I'm constipated. My dreams are fantastic, though. Vivid. I picture green-gray clouds rising above a deserted stucco apartment, an open ocean, throats, guttural, laughter, dangerous games in a Mexican saloon, a boyish physique slithering down a ladder in retreat. I stare at his retreating endoskeleton for hours every day, hours that could be better spent with a soldering iron smoldering rhetoric memory punch cards, but I can't. I'm lucky if I get an hour of solid technical labor in a day.

I'm the only one left on the project now. Most of the other scientists are disgusted with me, my madness and drug use. They think I'm a hopeless dreamer. Maybe that's all I am, but that's something. They've all quit and taken new to five work, dense jobs and university gigs, and what's more disgusting than that?

It appears to me that up until now I haven't been entirely honest. Regarding the last paragraph, I realize that I'm trying to turn this whole thing around, trying to make it seem that I accept the blame when all I'm really doing is shifting the focus to my former colleagues and their shortcomings. What I haven't mentioned, what I've been afraid and ashamed to mention, is that my family, on both sides, is plagued from on high by devastating mental illness. Both my father and my mother have been in and out of institutions their entire lives. My sister lives upstairs and is confined to a bed except during dance therapy, when one of the orderlies pushes her around in a grocery cart.

I'm wrought with self-doubt. Unsure if I'm practicing good science or if I'm just as lost as they are, how does one ever know? I keep telling myself, "You're sane! You're sane! You're sane!..." But what a unity when you're working to resurrect a libertine genius! I need to embrace my violent, sane or otherwise, if the project is to see its end. Old Lee would back me up on that for sure.

Though I have it on good authority from Darryl's mother, who works at a university in the Midwest, that I've been outed by the scientific community. Ferocious men in white lab coats and safety goggles are hounding me. I have visions. They carry all manner of sharpened prods to control me with, make me question my intellectual fortitude and tell me what is and is not possible.

I imagine my body seized by trampoline frequency spasms, my heart shuddering beneath cracked buckling ribs. I'm seeing my own demise. I breathe and twitch in a pool of fisher-smelling sweat, a trickle of blood down a nerve, scratching reddened gashes in my throat for one last breath, my face convulsed into a thousand terrible grimaces. If ever I needed an enhanced robotic clone of William S. Burroughs, the time is now. I want to call him Bill and ask him why I feel this way? There aren't a lot of people I can talk to these days. When Lana and I split, she said, really pissed off, she said, "He'll never have a heart."

That still cuts me.

My heart beats to create more new-fangled grimoires. The Burroughs Robot, for all his tubes, cranks, gears, and shafts, will be more real than he'd care to imagine. I'd like to think that he and I will share a soul. That's a dream of mine, I suppose, to share something real, but a good dream. I see that my dream is feasible. It could be real. Look for the improved William S. Burroughs in stores in 5 minutes.

CHARLES MARTIN

AUTOPSYCHOGRAPHY

(Fernando Pessoa: Autopsychographie)

The poet knows just how to feign,
So very thorough his pretense is
That he pretends to have the pain
He honestly experiences.

And those who read of pain in verses
That he has written keenly feel
Not the two pains that he possesses,
But just their own, which is unreal.

So round and round in every season,
Upon its tracks this gaily smart
Toy train goes on, beguiling reason,
And it is called the human heart.

GARDNER McFALL

STORY OF US

Would we have stepped into the little boat
of marriage then knowing what we do now
how narrow the watchband gumsoles, precarious
the balance, one of us in the bow, the other
at the stern, changing places with difficulty,
always moving, headed for rock-strewn rapids
or boiling currents, blistering our hands,
afraid mortal falls might appear at the bend?

We would never have left the sweet night lulls
blanketed with stars, found the moon rising
settling our anger, our grief, witnessed
the landscape transmute along banks we desired
and touched. If we'd stayed on the dock, untraveled,
unspent, we'd have no beginning, expect no end.

LOUIS McKEE

SPARKS

When we know plenty,
when we have what we want,
be sure, something is missing.
Trought my mind a burning
with good thoughts of you;
in the evening so much sob.
Blow softly, move what's not right.
What's left, but embers, spark
if you whisper the right words.

PABLO MEDINA

MANDATE

Go forth and copulate,
said the Deaf to the Deaf,

his eyes fixed
on an interstellar point

somewhere between the end of all
and the beginning of poetry.

PHILIP MILLER

SHADES IN MARCH

I'm standing outside
looking inside
a window that by some trick
of light and reflection
mirrors two figures,
one behind the other.
Each wears my old cap
and smokes a killer cigarette,
and for a moment I think
they must be the color
of the spirit, the hue
of river water, of
smoke's shadows, of
singid cellophane.
But when I squat,
I can make out
other images, one
after another,
diminishing
to a point like
the microscopic seed
I come from, that becomes
the thing I am now,
a man standing,
watching his life,
like a *Portrait*
of a Man Descending,
back to his beginnings,
while he stands
in the present,
which must really
be the end,
as if I'm waiting
for each shadowy
reflection to walk
through the other
and join me,
where I stand
and when I was,

each one raises
a transparent hand
and waves back,
and when I turn
and go, they do too,
returning
to twinkle,
while I wake up,
walk into the light
of one more day.

FINDING TIME

There it is, in between measures
of music: hand claps, a few coughs
from a captured audience
on this old '78 as its members
waited for the beat
to pick up, for a Beethoven crescendo
to carry them away like waves,

or in the lull between thunder
and green flashes of lightning
making a tree blaze in the mind,
condensing a small vision,
larger than life,
faster than minutes
ticking away like footsteps,

or on long afternoons,
music humming,
shadows abstracting
our shapes into order or chaos,
shorter or taller versions
running along
the ground,

and at twilight when
we long for what we've
not chosen,
the hours weighing
heavy as we kill them,
watching their ghosts
flaring behind us.

It stops, we imagine,
in the moment we share glances,
you having returned,
late sun in pools, a bird tuning up
before it flies with a whistle,
and a little before
comes down.

We are lost
between now and then
where the first words
we speak and the last
full stop
where we can lose them
again and again.

DAVID MILLS

THE LANGUAGE

The language of bubble is twinkle.

The language of wood is sky.

The language of tongue is milk.

The language of jelly is rain.

The language of river is bone.

The language of soup is stool.

The language of meat is stone.

The language of window is cream.

The language of moonlight stained glass.

The language of amber is whiskey.

The language of pen is eager.

The language of thought is lonely.

The language of coal is whisper.

The language of shampoo is fire.

The language of exercise is kinky.

The language of breathing is wrinkled.

The language of ink is death.

The language of satin bubbles.

The language of Gorgon is Gagaa.

The language of you is me.

The language of justice is breathless.

The language of P-funk is shattering.

The language of music is G-d.

The language of cowboy is tangy.

The language of blizzard is ash.

The language of shot is sloppy.

The language of census is Tuesday.

The language of Texas is crunch.

The language of wind is gingham.

The language of canyon is nice.

The language of wishes is too jam.

The language of heartache is solemn.

The language of cactus is silk.

The language of mustard's seductive.

The language of coral is barren.

The language of ham is bland.

The language of wand is grouse.

The language of gospel is egg yolk.

The language of booby is Slava.

The language of hope is Colgate.

The language of lightning is low-dee.

The language of apple is misty.

The TV of language is foreign.

The language of shadow is blue.

The language of stardust is perfect.

The language of winter is sleep.

The shadow of language is Sunday.

The shadow of language is Sunday.

The shadow of language is water day.

CENTENARY OF NERUDA

Neruda continues to be a festive part of earth's parades and with a creative power that has left a mark on his life and his readers throughout the world, Neruda lived his birthdays and he always invited his friends to them. At these parties, he would tell them they had to comply with two rules: they must have as much fun as possible and they must come to the house in magical costumes. For Neruda, wearing a costume did not mean becoming another person, completely to the contrary. It meant to dare to be oneself through the creative capacity that the costume allowed for. It meant to think about what one wanted to be and that always resulted in a wonderful metamorphosis greater than anyone could have imagined. Neruda not only initiated revolutions, but also the art of imagination.

In the twenty-first century, violence and fear advance and invade the spaces of our quotidian life and civil society is a prisoner of this violence and fear. But, above all, there exists an economic violence that impoverishes the spirit. It is necessary to remind ourselves with poetry in order to remind ourselves that we are imperfect and that we are capable of feeling love and happiness. When we read Neruda's poetry, it is necessary to rid ourselves of false attitudes and deceiving strata of conformity to feed the individuality and imagination that it gives. In addition, we should read and experience poetry slowly and with the care that each verse demands, as if it was the more precious letter. We must do this to find us in the beauty of words and we should be grateful for Neruda's poetry that can bring us this type of joy.

We must remind ourselves at the centennial of Pablo Neruda's birth to enjoy the beauty and magic of each day. Our goal should be to unite and preserve the planet instead of resorting to destruction. We can do this by struggling for social justice without assuming the position of underserving, unjustified, privileged people, but instead

edited by Marijane Aguirre

live like marginalized, third world people. We should desire peace, hope and all that each day offers us with a verse by Neruda in our hands and in our thoughts.

Congratulations Pablo and thank you for the life that you have brought us.

Marijane Aguirre

Marijane Aguirre

ISLA NEGRA

En la Negra
Pablo Neruda
camina por el agua:
de sus pies brotan
anémonas violetas,
violetas
mariposas,
señalantes
y rodantes.
En la Negra
Don Pablo
camina
danzante, danzando,
sus pies son
dos campanas, vertiginosas y dulces;
su voz
una palabra
un monumental
un trazo de agua
descomulgando, hasta el origen
del cielo
que palpita

Translated by Richard S. Tedlow & Robert Torres

ISLA NEGRA

En la Negra
Pablo Neruda
gum walking by the water:
violet sea anemones,
triumphant
butterflies,
adze-p
and rounded,
gather at his feet
On Isla Negra
Don Pablo
strides about,
a dancer, dancing,
his feet are
two giddy, sweet sounding bells;
his voice
a word
a clear spring,
a drop of water
filling, from the origin
of the sky
that pulses.

Nicomedeo Sánchez-Arriaga

LOS ULTIMOS

(Logan, Utah 1972)

Terminaremos plegando nuestras vidas
como servilletas en poco rígidas
por lo presuntos
de tantas descalzonadas bocas, tantas
gestos superfluos de un tondón
que se contran y disolviendo sin memoria

En este pequeño restaurante comemos
con nuestro cabello esparcido
entre las grietas del empapelado
y una sonrisa de talle de rosa
para la regodeta camarera,
contemplaremos el árbol tras el vidrio
y esperaremos, esperaremos la última cena
y el último árbol que se derrumbará
en absoluto silencio dentro de nosotros.

Translated by Robert S. Tedlow

THE LAST ONES

(Logan, Utah 1972)

We'll end up folding our lives
like napkins somewhat threadbare
by the presence of so many
decadent mouths, so many
superfluous gestures of a tendon
with no memory

In this small country restaurant
with our hair strewn among the cracks
of the wallpaper and a rose-stem smile
for the chubby waitress, we will watch
the tree, through the glass
and wait, and wait for our last supper
and for the last tree to fall knowledge
made ourselves.

Néstor Sánchez Arango

SOBRE EL SUEÑO

(Chorrillos, Perú, verano de 1946)

El ojo pierde latitudes este noche. Lento es el cruzar de las estrellas
cuando las luces terrestres chillan cual jubilosos niños.

Hacia el punto azul de un lejano barco deriva el olán
urbano. Zarpamos hacia nunca en el rotar de las horas, nuestros
cráneos llenos de guirnaldas del pasado.

Un resaca de viento en serena se confunde con los largos cabellos
de mi amada, mientras los árboles, siluetas de antracitas, se yergen
con sus redes vacías. Por ello, en la cantina de Chorrillos, el borracho
encuentra escamas de cascabel de lana en su copa, en la cual el silencio
y la noche se tornan niebla.

Conforme las horas transcurren la noche extiende sobre nuestro sueño,
descubriéndole bajo la piel a nuestras tristes ciudades

Translated by Derek and Evelyn

ABOVE SLEEP

(Chorrillos, Peru, Summer of 1946)

Here lose latitudes tonight. The stars cross gently
when earth's lights shout like joyful children

Towards the blue point of a distant ship the urban west
drifts. We sail towards never in the rotation of hours, our skulls
full of shards from the past

A quipped poet of wind entangles in the long hair
of my loved one, while trees, carbon silhouettes, rise up
with their empty nests. That is why the cantina in Chorrillos, a drunkard
finds scales of moon rattlesnake in his glass, in which silence and night
turn to fog.

As hours pass by, night rises above our sleep, uncovering
torment cities beneath our skin

Edward Hirsch

SECOND STORY WAREHOUSE

(Summer, 1961)

Come with me to the second story warehouse
where I filled orders for the factory downstairs,
and commanded the freight elevator, and read
high in the air on a floating carpet of bones.

I could touch the damp paper in the ceiling
and smell the rust. I could look over
the Puerto Rican workers in the parking lot,
smoking and laughing and kidding around

in Spanish during their break, especially Julia,
who bit my lower lip until it bruised and bled,
and taught me to roll cigarettes in another language,
and called me her virgin boy from the suburbs.

All summer I read Neruda's *Canto General*
and took lessons from Juan, who trained me
to accept orders with dignity—*dignidad*—
and never take any shit from the foreman.

He showed off the steel plate in his skull
from a bar fight with a drunken supervisor,
while the phone blinked endlessly from Shipping
& Handling, and light glinted off the forklift.

The world felt like a piece of waxy, fluted paper
trapped between two sheets of linoleum
in the Single Wall, double faced boxes
we filled and cursed, sweated and stacked

on top of heavy wooden skids. I dreaded
the large, unwieldy, industrial A flutes
and the 360 stack cartons that we carried
in bundles through the dusty aisles.

while downstairs a line of blue collars led
dusting, gluing, and stitching machines.
Juan taught me about moilers and mauldepths,
and praised the torrential rains of childhood,

the oysters that hid in the bloody coral,
their pearls shimmering in the twisted rock,
green stones polished by typhoon storms
and coconut palms waving in the twilight.

He passed the sun that flamed over the island
like a bell ringed with fire, or a sea rose,
and the secret torch that forever burns
inside us, a beacon that no one can touch

Come with me to the second story warehouse
where I learned how to squat and lift,
how to reach the vans and five panel holders,
and saw the iron shine inside a skull

Every day on precisely three in the afternoon
we delivered our orders in the loading dock.
We may go down dusty and tired, Juan said,
but we come back smelling like the sea.

Isabel Torres
EL TORO ES BRUTO

the bird has horns
the snail has you over ever me d-s
the body has you
the morning has horns and comes in worn horn slow
the bird has you
you look like you draw you
you move in slow motion you move me to motion
your ears smell of lotion your whispers are motions
lost
in the mud
of the act of you
you smell like sex
all over me soft and strong

El Pastore La Fina
the bull has feathers
the snail has you has me all over
scents sending, with holding, hole hold me tight tighter
than that
tighter than that
tighter
to not just be in you
to be you
in tight
in tight
night petal cape hole hold me all over
dark placed dark places down placed down
feather slow
the bull has me

La Paloma Pattinada:
the dove skating

Cecilia Vicuña
CARTA A LOS BOSQUES PELLÔMAWIDA

Aquí vengo a hablarte Pellômaiwida ahora que se celebra el nacimiento de Neruda,

"Libro,
misma bosque"

Tú Pellô, lo sabes bien, el nació de sí de su
Mamda, vientre y follaje, bush del bosque,
mato e' pelo. Que si no hubiera estado jugando
entre tus ramas, saltando y bailando detrás de
un bicho no habría sabido ver ni oír, ni mucho
menos ater la vida. Pero dime, ¿quién, en esta
tierra, dirá: "Neruda es el poeta de los bosques?
el ahora hermano de bosque?"

En estos cien años casi has desaparecido.
Solo quedan pequeñas "islas," retazos, manchas
de bosque donde ver, percibir los ritmos y
configuraciones que nutren (nutram) su poesía.

Ahora el único bosque que queda es el poema

Los golpes de luz, la lluvia entrando en el humus
vibrante, las "relampagos vestidos de arcángel"
se van.

Ahora sus líneas son la selva perdida, el mato
del maternal, las frías largas y el ritmo posado,
la lluvia que cae no en la tierra poética, sino en el
humus blando, el cuerpo de un reptil que escapa
"el espíritu de un árbol" extinguido

Bosque muerto.

¿Quién dirá ¿dónde están? Estos poemas son la guía,
el mapa sensorial de lo que fuimos y hoy no está?

"el perfume del conito después de la lluvia?"

Tú lo sabes bien. Hace pocos días volé al sur.
Casi no se ve la selva Mamda, sólo bosque
industrial. "Casi" es el tamaño del amor o Neruda.
No una palabra consumida como un fuego más,
artificial o intencional.

¿Viste, ma? Neruda no dice "nativo," sino
bosque o caca, o "selva templada." El bosque
bosque, bosquero y boscal, aún no es
nombrado "nativo" porque es.
(Llamado "nativo," y desaparecerá.)

Cuipin, lengo y radi celebrati
Permitame que los llamo a ti.

Amar de bosque, palabra emboscada,
éso sería el verdadero amor a la poesía.

Cecilia Vicuña
Santiago-New York, enero 2004

PREGUNTA:

¿Se podría deducir una ^dramática del "relampago encendido?"
g

^d
Una ^rrrr del raul?
g
Un ^grugido del ruido con que escribo?
d

^d
Cae/rir una ^gramática de las venas de un poema?

Una distaste (imagina)?

Un serido que vuelve al palen
y la ferunda de sav/sativa?

¿DÓNDE ESTÁ NERUDA?

Un objeto conceptual

Desafiorado y perseguido por el gobierno de
Gonzalez Videla, Neruda partió a la clandestinidad.
Mi abuelo, Carlos Vicuña Fuentes lo defendió, y la
policía política, pensando que lo tenían que acendi-
do, vino a buscarlo a nuestra casa en la cordillera.
Yo estaba en el vientre de mi madre, o colgando
de una teta, recién nacido, (no sé). Mi abuelo dice,
"aquí no está Neruda" y mi tía Lola, interviene,
divertida: "Ya se adonde está Neruda!" Todos se
quedan pasmados (incluso mi abuelo): ¿Adónde?
"Aquí," dice ella traviesa, mostrando un dibujo en
la revista España.

Notas

Pellômaiwida: Mapudungu, pellô: alca,
mamda, vientre, selva, bosque,
arbol. P. Félix José de Augusta.

Witrari: Mapudungu, narrado, mato,
convulsión, diestra, palabra, historia. (Bida)

Bush: bosque, arbusto, raíz germánica.

LETTER TO THE PELICMANAIDA FORESTS

Here I come to speak to you Pellamawale now that we celebrate the birth of Nevada.

—*Best.*
—*man of honor*—

Arctia, you know it well, he was born from you! From your stovetop, warmth and foliage, bushy forest, brushy bar! Had he not played and danced amongst your branches, swiping behind a bug he would not have known how to see our heart, much less to smooch its.

But tell me, who in this land, will say "Serena is the poet of the forest, the orphan of the forest?"

In three hundred years you have nearly disappeared. Only small "islands" remain, remnants, patches of forest in which to see, to perceive the rhythms and configurations that nourish (sustain) his poetry.

Now the only forest that remains is the peat

The bursts of light, the rain entering the vibrant kumog, the "lightning dressed in rain-bow" are leaving

Now the lanes are the lost jungle, the shed-trees of the rioter, the long phantasies and the slow oblivion, the room that falls not on the bare earth, but into the soft humus, the body of a nymph escaping "the quail at a tree" extinct.

Land Forest.

Who will say "Where are you?" These poems are the guide, the sensory map of what we were and today is not.

³the *crucianensis* over's scent after the swim?

You know it well. A few days ago I flew south. There was almost no *Maraul*, no jungle left, only industrial forest. "Almost" is the state of our love of Neruda. Not a word conjured like one more fin, artificial or intentional.

You see, this *Arctostaphylos* doesn't see "native," just forest, or "temperate jungle." The forest forest, forest is and forest is, is not named "native" yet, because it is. (Call it "native," and it will disappear.)

Allow me to call them unto you.

Love of forest, ambushed word,
that would be the true love of poetry.

Santiago: New York, Intercity 2004

QUESTION:

Could we deduce $s = \frac{4}{5}$ minus from the 'rainbow lightning'?

A. π from the result

A note from the note with which I wrote^d

To gather a *manuscrit* from the veins of a poem!

As irregular starts?

A sound that returns to the pollen
 impregnating it with seed/what?

New York, 2004.

"WHITE IS NERD!"

A concentrated volume

Deposed and abandoned by the González Videla government, Neruda fled into clandestinity. My grandfather, Carlos Vicuña Fuentes defended him, and the political police, thinking that we had been hidden, came to look for him at our house in the mountains. I was in my mother's womb or hanging from a branch, newborn. I don't know. My grandfather told me, "Neruda is not here" and my aunt told interviews, among herself, "I know where Neruda is!" All are left speechless (even my grandfather). Where? Here," she says mockingly, showing in a cartoon in *El Mercurio*.

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Figure 1

Aphis aceris. Myzodiplosis; petiole swollen, succulent, single.
Sweet tree = Zelba (see de Sappada).

Satish Mehrotra, executive vice president, says he will meet with GAO.

[illegible]*C. angulatus* Neofelis (Anguilliformes: Anguillidae)

Arbeitskreis "Schulbuchlagen in der DDR"

Cash, Securities, reserves

All three, all times of the week, family, native to temperate parts of the western hemisphere (like me) and Argentina.

Severin lost his citizenship as a trustee of the Republic in 1946, after he gave a speech in congress denouncing the newly elected President Gabriel González Videla for betraying the progressive principles of the alliance which brought him to power.

LA NARANJA TODAVÍA ES AJENA

La naranja todavía es ajena
recorrió y vuelve a calles que conozco
con sabor a naranja agria
de tupidísimos compartidos
y naranjas robadas de vecinos
vuelve
retorno
al pien
de naranja ajena
donde no se pela todavía
y sobrevive al ácido del eslio
errante en la lengua
y vuelve
y retorno

porque no se pela todavía
porque tu piel es cacería del cielo
donde sembré mi corazón en tu polvo
y traigo un pedazo sin raíz
corazón en el norte
donde sangro por volver
a la trinchera de los pesadillas
y vuelvo
y retorno

a este camino
vuelvo al domicilio pavimento de mi infancia
en las preguntas que ya saben
me fui
y ustedes se quedaron
vuestro arrugado de recuerdos
y mi ventura será de otra
y la guardilla con asombro de sueño y vigilia
será de otro
donde la lluvia será de otra

y vuelvo a las calles y me pierdo
vuelvo a los nombres que recuerdo
al cielo ojos de abrazo

donde la naranja
todavía es joven.

translated by the author

THE FLESH OF THE ORANGE STILL BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE

The flesh of the orange still belongs to someone else
I walk and return to the streets that I know
with a taste of better orange
of shared leaves
of molten oranges
I come back
and I return

to the country
where the flesh of the orange still belongs to
someone else
where the skin is not yet peeled
and I save the seed of exile
that moves through my tongue
and I come back
and I return

because the skin of the orange is not yet peeled
because your skin is the husk of the day
where I cultivated my heart in your dust
and I bring a rootless piece
of heart from the north
where it bleeds to come back
to the trenches of night terrors
and I come back
and I return

to this road
I come back to my previous address posted by
my childhood
and to the questions that you already know
I left
and you stayed behind
I return full of wrinkled memories
my window will belong to another
my attic, refuge of dreams and enigmas
will belong to another
the rain will belong to another

and I come back to the streets and I get lost
I return to the names that I remember
to the sky eyes of an embrace

where the flesh of the orange
still belongs to someone else

Martin Espada THE GOOD LIAR MEETS HIS EXECUTIONERS *for Nelson Aizán, Valparaíso, Chile*

The first time
the good liar
met his executioners
was at the military tribunal
after the coup.
Before the row of officers,
withered still as seaweed now,
he grew more polite and forgetful
with each name rolled
on the list: "No, señor. No, señor."
On the wall, the portrait of General Pinochet,
mountain and sunglasses, flowering.

The good liar returned home that day,
but songs of red songs
reddened the waters of Chile
luna down in the current,
and the executioners kept vigil
over blazing pyramids of books,
so a passport was forged
with a plan to leave Chile by sea.
Somewhere the waves
rumbled a promise for him
like a chorus of monks.

The second time
the good liar
met his executioners
was at the dock,
hunched in a peacock
with a duck on his shoulder.
A pistol dug into his neck,
chamber clicked
like a bored sleepwalker
cracking his knuckles.
A guard disbelieved the passport
stamped Merchant Marine,
the list of names quivering
on his other hand.

"My name is not on that list,"
the good liar said,
and since his executioner
could not read
without tracing a finger slowly
across the page,
the pistol relaxed, leaving
the imprint of the barrel,
and only the passport was burned
somewhere the sea lions
lumbered from the surf
and waited all night for him.

The third time
the good liar
met his executioners
was at the house of his mother
how his name was on the list,
troops rifle-jabbing him
still in his underwear
to the pickup truck,
lurching on the sidewalk
begging to give him
at least the dignity of his pants,
neighbors listening with bowed heads.

On the way to the firing squad,
a building bill where every skull
recalled the bullet's cloud of ink
flooding the beam,
the good liar awaited fables
of a colonel he knew,
barbiques in the backyard
and dating his daughters,
boasting to the other,
condemned companions
loud enough
for curious executioners to believe.
The truck circled back
and left him at the rail instead,
thirty men in a room
settling for a prelude to beheading
or a rubber post rocking with pain.
Somewhere the ocean boiled for him,
as it here a giant octopus had wrapped itself
around a warship full of admirals.

After hull, the good liar
smuggled himself away from Chile,
the green waves lifting him.
You have to be a good liar, he says
in the sanctuary of steaming coffee
he tells what he knows three times,
what the lie is,
who the liar is.

ODESSA HERRING 1983

Odessa is a port city, it's kinda close to the sea. Let's sit down on a bench and relax a few minutes under this old shady chestnut tree. Eh? Fresh paint? Fine, let's sit farther down in the open. Have you brought your reading matter? It would be nice to an ideal world. Good, save it for the herring! Drink beer shuddering content, becoming all-entwined in this red heat! Are you nuts! Think in exotemplation, rising above hania, of your heart, to say nothing of the brain. to know perfectly — tasting strawberries' taste, imagine well how you will feel to see the pencil raise its perfect tip, when you're 70, not 17. The beach? We to watch perfectly — fitting cushioned clip can go there later. Chill man. This is messages out of nirvanescent skies, 1983 — there is nothing you can do about it. to wear armor of perfect alibi, it's nice to see some foreign tourists around. to strum on a perfected lute, because They are friendly toward us, interested in the perfect match for my perfect medium, Russia. But our generation's no death. to filter life through perfect harmony. Glad school is over for good, as they to send poetry to the economy stay in English. What did you say? What time is to tackle mathematics with the One, at? Faith how lonely it is fuck how lonely when boat that perfect coast song and be gone. even with people, with friends around, and it continues so without a change. Plus, boy, I don't like this one bit. This book is giving me sleepers. Besides, it's beginning to rain. This pouring rain will drown us, according to my brownies. So, open the escape route. Let's bail.

THE SEEDED FRIEND OF HUMANKIND IS CASHED

Standard and Poor's (S&P) is a world leader in financial information and analytical services. It provides the financial and business community with analytical tools, accurate and time-sensitive information, and expert commentary. The seeded friend of humankind is cashed, monetary that facilitate and in-but I have found a place where more is stashed. Because decision making a lab where every leaf is dried to that about investments. S&P's CUSIP word-perfect flum and readiness to act ISIDPlus CD-ROM product, dew on every syllable. The mount trapeze leaped by Kanda Software in 1997, of serve remotely utter than you, please provides an interactive environ-and marches down directly to the page most for quickly locating security to perpetrate its numerous legends. Identifiers and descriptions for half semantic hunches swift to tilted tiles, a million CUSIP and ISID assets and titles brim with paratactic styles, and millions of Corporate, Municipal, and efflu heron of the golden ring. Government, Mortgage Backed and who come to spell a wish on everything. Private Placement Issues, and is gallop with lust and neighing through the long, mas from the Internation-god-naughty and immensely down to song. A Securities Identification Directors. The product is fitted with a powerful search and retrieval system designed to find information on issuers based on complex search criteria, with ability to print or export search results to another Windows application.

Tealberthly staid, distantly approachable stand statistics, a
wind tossed tray flaps by, we have never consumed so much
art, we have never driven so much gas, it disgusts me to open
The Hague down through my yawning every morning. the
They see Philip, it's 7 a.m., get up! agenda still hidden be-
My head still hazy with the coffeeshop, hand the newspaper,
I dash for fresh espresso. Not a thing unseen to a world of
stunned in the city while I slept. No gilder opinion glass, manu-
clicked in a cab. No tourist around a brewn. Tired by his predi-
It's hard for me, a casual beholder, lectures, store literatures
ever to find more peaceful nights than those. downed into the
The town will take me, the martini make me, the cash bin, heck
They bring me very far and very near to it, I have taken off my
under the chestnuts of Marinkwartier, out to the in the crowds
whose coalescent floodbouts may mistake me of tramping, of
for an inquisitive diplomat for I say acquiescing daily into the
what up to them on every passing day, elementary appetain of
copper talismans on a pendulum line, to let be but a time shamer
of martini, I again up the treasure of laps, I'll be getting out of
here shortly, but not soon enough not to have seen all I must see.

There was treble trouble upon us when the clouds drifted close to
the ground, their staidless heads glowing over our noses standing
at human height in the labyrinthine staccato of rain with its sweet-
Fraternat on television, the day rushes car refrain. A footstone
into twilight. The olive-colored outlines inclusion painted all
of homes gain obscure clarity. The ponds over downtown's soaked
disintegrate, hoist by their own petards, skull of visual glass, face
Visually over our oblate spheroid of atmospheric behavior, fiddle
the slow sky streams its stellar celluloid Viraqua of skin most,
until sleep makes the body leave behind migrating and, captured
the ruminations of its heavily mind, fresh postures and fisher hap-
Silent stars under white hot torture too, lets from Salem to Ipswich
but they have nothing curious to confess, and the offshore islands,
Socrates says, "Any goodnight to the poets, blinding blinking light
They believe something and yet they don't know it, houses with an
All night they gaze like idiot at the stars, acquire wingedness, then
bubbling in cosmogenic metaphors." back and wringing with full
power around the Hancock Tower, and with a lurch around Trinity
Church, obliterating sweetest, squishing antique legal shoppes,
wet pub crowding in haups of sweet-bills and other old timer flora.

PUERTO RICAN PASTORAL

There goes the boat,
And he took the shoe with him.
The party's over in these dylic lands,
A sweet and sour air circulates it all
Like a slug from a flask of ethyl alcohol.

The grandmothers recall
Those loathely placed afternoons
Spent napping on hard leaves.
The stuffed birds lost in their ancient *mu-la* is

Be quiet! (Is that we know how common it is
To be blinded by acid
(Disfused too)

The fog will sever our toothless ancestries.

This is the death of my chloroform island
Puerto Rico
drowning in sensory odors
Puerto Rico
the faded smiles, the faded city,
the 7-Eleven
the formless prophecy of starglit that explodes

DECADE / DECAYED

Ten years down the road
I will have lost my share of disassembling
The doubts and tears that lacerated me
To sword, endangered trees
In the tropical zones,
All stumpie countenances and withered roots.

Five years down the road
I will have worn my end of the world haircut
So past, but proudly nonetheless.
Bald in the waterways and streets
Of cities they forgot to name

Four years down the road
I'll march through Ivy League halls
PhD in hand
Swung and cool and discolored,
Ironing out my itches
For collegial coffee talk and academic publication.

Three years down the road
I will be told of an effluent angel
Who was busily transcribing
My aloof E-Z chair cosmogony.
But by then I'll be blind,
Snapping one foot forward then the next,
Unimpressed by culture wars,
Polar state cases, or life on Mars.

Two years down the road
I will have woken up
From the suffering of self and others;
Have woken up another ethnic neighborhood
With my silly, sub-latin cries
Of "I'm not freed" and "I'm beginning to see the light"
Automatic darwin calls of velvet fog
Chambering on rooftops
Letting out my last laugh
Under morning sunscreens megaphone

One year down the road
I will have collected
Drunken napkins of Madrid,
Istanbul, and, hopefuhr,
Sao Paulo,
Cracking the glass eye
Of our landlocked tremors
(Candid camera obscurant!)

Six months down the road
This hollow dream may just corrode.

But now I need the carcass of your smile,
For this is the hour of desperate storytelling.
And world-weary syllables
And I'm too busy forgetting how to sing.
In this muted bladed taparia
Where Ultron (John's "Nikita") plays at half-speed
Where the luping TV prophesies piddie life-affirming
Quarks and skin lotions
Where the morning paper reeks of sweaty diplomats
Preheating continents, development—
Don't they know the decade is a laundry list?
Can't they read its know-how script?

Last hours. Last manifests:

"I need the amnesty of you."

PAINTING BY NUMBERS

Couldn't be simpler, said the packet,
confident of its cellophane, unmoved
in the needlework shadow of a green Christmas.

Inside, sheets inferred the spines of things —
spindles of bloodless gardens, a beached boat
pulsed clean in falsehood. Needle to sup,

I mewed it up. Confused sex with noise.
Saw nothing rare in a lemon front door
— but indigo sunflowers? The dream house suffered

from my spectral eyes, from two colours
darker than meant to be. The upstairs windows
bleated outwards, braused in eyes.

Perhaps that's why I'm still here, making
every word count, going through rainbows
to match your moods — all the while aware

that behind your perfect teeth, the rigid
white smile, there's something faint and smart
like a number showing through.

AO AMIGO SUICIDA

Éramos jovens. Desconhecíamos
que a água das mãos superava
a espuma de nossos entendimentos.
Preferíamos a biografia de rebeldes
porque neles
o ato dos argumentos
flutua
e medeia dos próprios dedos.

Tivemos paridade
o périplo das famílias portuguesas.
Adolescentes
acostumados à solidão dos quartos
fomos ao teatro — a lá ficamos
atados
e um fascínio de formas
incomformadas.

Seguimos com a trouxa nos ombros...

Chegaste mais cedo porém
ao espelho
em que a rotina se mede
com os altos lábios
(mesmo num asséptico quarto de pensão)
quando se fez conhecer
o sentença dos teus desejos
abandonando o mundo.

TRIBUTO A KEITH JARRET

Pianista
das fições aéreas

paisagem
de som e arremesso

a tua música
dobro o tempo

plástico aquecido em
preto

TO A FRIEND WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE

Being young, we didn't know
the water of the oceans far exceeded
the foam of our understanding.
We preferred the biography of rebels,
for in them
the art of argument
dissolves
the measurement of one's own fingers.

We had the route
of Portuguese families in common.
Adolescents
used to the solitude of rooms,
we went to the theater — and stayed
bound there
memorized
by uncomfortable forms
and left with our bundles
over our shoulders. ...

You arrived earlier, however,
at the mirror
in which the face measures itself
with its lofty lips
(even in the asphalt room of a boarding house)
where you came to know
the sentence of your desires
abandoning the world.

TRIBUTE TO KEITH JARRET

Pianist
of aerial illusion

landscape
of sound and release

your music
doubles time

plastic heated
in after

pontos
aí lá é não

em voo
plano

dado a estrelas
flocos

aproximações
branco a preto

sons
em aro

as naturais inquietações
da água.

From "Poema"

2.

Sobre o chão das ruas não circulam bicicletas
nem o girar das rodas mecânicas ameaça
a manha oblíqua.
Os prementimentos crescem junto aos ossos
as medas ganham o correr das muralhas
junto aos amigos.

Eu imagino (por livre imaginação)
que numa das casas próximas
banhada em sol
vibra um fabricante de bonecas.

Concebo o homem e suas criaturas
a desfazerem intimidades
no fim do tarde.

Bonecas tocadas em rodas de porcelana.

se lá é não
pontos

in flight
plano

given to stars
snowflakes

black and white
approximations

sounds
in an arc

the natural restlessness
of water

2.

On the street, no bicycles circle,
not even the spin of mechanical wheels
threatens the oblique morning.
Promontories grow along with the bones
from win the rush over the walls
likewise with friends

I imagine (freely imagining)
that in one of the houses nearby
bathed in sunlight
lives a dollmaker.

I picture a man and his creatures
unraveling intimacies
as the afternoon ends.

Dolls grazed in the nakedness of porcelain.

WHISKY

Someone must always be blamed,
so why not it, destroyer of women and men,
maker of dementia and disorder?

Tonight, though, we have a date
on the tide of delay or as close
as we can get, the smoke must

on our tongue, the pest bugs
of all the lost past burning,
the hot smoke of our words

pretending to be memory
instead of the invention it is,
always afraid of the morning.

Sharing with a friend, his book
kissing the table, open mouthed,
I pour seriously and trust

He speaks of poetry and time,
Recalls the long weekend
of whiskey and green words

when so many dreamed of harvest,
dusk on the winter only plants
and weeds, plows and warts.

It is others who come to take it,
leave only the bridle of stems,
their heel prints in the earth.

indeed, this is what we asked
from the beginning — come, take
the nightmare rest of them

but of rot and rust, of stunted
growth and the weariness
of a thing raised half bad or worse,

Tonight, though, a single malt
that is the only hint
of what we'd imagined the word

could provide. So we talk,
recall the snippets of lines
from the great who sat,

we're sure, swirling their
golden glows, slow,
as if by moon and fire.

lembra do cheiro de morto pelo campo.
o campo carregava as várzeas, as várzeas
carregavam
os rios; os rios iam pelo meu caminho.
no meu caminho estavam as boia, as boia
só mugem,
deixo na beira do tempo sou muge esquecido.
o mundo girava sozinho na corda de um eixo
irritável.

A queda do mar anda
a idéia de chuva.
Águas invadem a seca
tílica mensagem do espelho azul,
naufragam a certeza
do chão, a pão
na moenda que moem as mãos
dos que moem açúcar
dos que colhem os dedos nos laranjeiros.
A chuva retrai o senso
de coisa perdida.
A chuva não perdoo,
permanece o cristal
de sangue na tina.
Um corpo vem conhecer
nos bastros
o cheiro de ferro das vigas,
as setras do cidade.
a carcaça do bandido
enquanto a chuva segue o crepúsculo
procura do sol
no oídio.

i remember a smell of death on the fields,
the fields cradled marshes, the marshes cradled
rivers; the rivers went my way,
there were steers on my way, steers can only howl
i leave that howling in time's corners,
the world swirls by itself on the chord
of an invisible axis.

The fall of surf eddies
the idea of rain
Water invades the dry season —
consumptive message in a blue mirror
wrecking certainty
of ground, bread
from millstones that grind the hands
of those who grind sugar
for those harvesting fingers from orange trees.
Mindless,
rain draws back the sense
of something lost,
a crystal of blood
on the basin.
A body learns the smell
of iron beams
in alleys,
the city's channels,
the thief's carcass,
while rain follows the early
dawn of an enlaid sun.

ALTERING OUR CLOCKS

This hour magicked away, crained up the aerie of time.
Of course, we know it's there just waiting for craning time,
breast thrust in near frost air. For now it is pulsed, hidden
by light, the sulphur flares of daffodils, fat candle magnolia.
Each half was this same trick. Earth spun a little quicker,
a little slower, to fool the clockwatch eye. Telling us into
thinking we can hold each grain, turn and turn the inner,
watch sand trickle at our own rate, discover and discover.
As you sleep I listen to you breathe, some private rhythm
that pulls me deep into the pace of how your life is lived.
The cycle of lungs filling, heart pumping, it seeps along,
your body burning out its own particular ash, and I am
in slow orbit, can now rise into shadow, now full face sun,
the heat and chill of your seasons quivered in my blood.

SIGNS

The balcony is wet. Mom cowers where the door slides
open, dicks into place. Aspen quake. On the blue
light of the field below, six denuded teenagers
pass a glue-filled bag from mouth to mouth, blue
lipped. Bell-bottomed women plough strollers. Smell
of rain, droplets on your hand, your future quivers blue
as mercury. In two minutes your mother will burst
through the door and in her grief, in her blue
mood, knock the lampshade off its base, smash the dishes
piled in the sink. You're watching for signs: blue
blood spilt, tears from a traffic light, trees growing
through metal, something warmer than blue.

SURFACE

*The Russian nuclear submarine Kuroi, sunk in the Barents Sea
on August 12, 2000.*

Mid-August, overheated, moonrings lost, lives boxed,
we slog to the Danforth Ice souvlaki andiced lattes,
quick shots of the Barents Sea, 118 sailors suspended
in five hundred feet of steel, flickering on screens
in movie windows, and time, over the cash register.
You say you don't want to leave, but who
can afford the luxury of home these days?
All that last night as you slept, I lay my cheek
on the cool floor of the echoing kitchen, listening
to overcast broadcasts and constant updates: the Kursk,
the longshots, the probabilities I imagine Dmitri
and Alexei in their bunks, the notes, the last seconds.
Were they aware we were all listening? How we are all
in our wired worlds, on the bottom of the Barents,
tapping our goodbyes to the balloon whales.

FURYDICE IS WED

Their union spelled disaster all along.
The second exit musicians' wobbling song
was first, the guests were late, the groom's drunk dad
was telling everyone the nymphs he'd had
when he was young and filled with more than wine.
Nowhere they looked was there a fruitful sign.
And then the marriage god brought smoke, not fire.
Storming past the awful, wailing choir,
he tripped across a bridesmaid's awkward dress,
floundered once before proceeding to urbleen
both bride and groom, the festival and rites.
But while he carved their union's coming nights,
they took the chance all leaves finally take —
though most are not forewarned of their mistake.

THE MEETING PLACE

The requisite tour done, their photos snapped,
congratulated on the honeymoon,
they left the pools of tourists on black rats
and placid schools of giant parrotfish
to find the shadowy source, the starting place
where jungle banks reclaimed the civilized.

It wasn't long before they found the path
to where the waters met, saline and fresh.
Someone had stretched a bridge across the bay.
No, not a bridge, but narrow planks to make
a floating pier. There were no rails, no ropes.
The water lapped the edges, lunged across,
and they too rose and sank. The strangeness was
the thing's precision.

One side held the river
and lazy river life. The other hemmed
the sea, where leaping, snapping ocean fish
surfaced and crashed against the rocking boards.
As if there were no net, the separate sides
kept neatly in themselves. There was no net,
only the floating bridge which marked the place.

It was a frightening thing to watch the sea
so full of life, the bodies pressed against
the boundary line. It seemed to speak in love,
the shifting line, the narrow meeting plank
which saves us from the dangers of the world,
and is a danger too. They stood in it,
rising and plunging, a long time in silence,
then, knowing the thing was there in that moment only,
turned, a half day wiser, for the bench.

HOMEBOYS BEATJUGGLING DOWN THE
WESTSIDE HIGHWAY*

Of course I tried to tell him
but he turned up Chet Baker on the jazz station
and that's plain inescapable.
I told him children grow
and women produce
And he smiled and said:
"Listen to this nigger right here."
I was feeling funky fresh
upon
So I said: "Some trees go to work
and some go stealing."
Then later he laughed
and said: "Hey [I] just play that song,
Keep me dancing
all night."
After that I knew the
bottle was on —
So we lit right
He said: "Uhh Ohh you know what
you could do let me tell you
what's for me and then
I'll tell you what's for you."
I said: "Now Peter Paper picked peppers
but Run rocked rhythms."
He said: "L.Cool is hard as hell."
I said: "South Bronx. The South South Bronx.
The South Bronx."
He said, getting real mad,
"Aye. Eee. Aye, um, eve, oh, you, you, and
sometimes why."
I said, only smiling.
"P is for the way people can't understand
how our homieboy became a man."
We ended switching lanes to the piano solo in
All the Things You Are,
Ising Zip-Hop!

*After Gregory Corso, "Poem Hitchhiking on the Highway"

NUCLEAR WINTER: NEW YORK, 2003

Making tape —
making tape my ass
That shit don't keep out the cold
Fuck it it gonna do
For radiation

CITY OF GOD

Who sweeps the streets in the city of God?
Who does the laundry in the city of God?
Who runs the grins in the city of God?
Who runs the bonds in the city of God?
Who directs the traffic in the city of God?
Who drives the taxis in the city of God?
Are angels the pots in the city of God?
Who provides the books in the city of God?
Who plays the music in the city of God?
Who writes and reads poems in the city of God?
Who teaches children in the city of God?
Who wears clothes in the city of God?
Who supplies prayers in the city of God?
Who cooks food in the city of God?
Who puts out fires in the city of God?
Who lights candles in the city of God?
Who psychoanalyzes in the city of God?
Who plays doctor in the city of God?
Who hands out tickets in the city of God?
Who paints pictures in the city of God?
Who builds walls in the city of God?
Who brings danger to the city of God?
Who adds death and birth to the city of God?
Who understands all the languages in the city of God?
Who sells toy trucks and race cars in the city of God?
Who maintains the streetlamps in the city of God?
Who checks the traffic light in the city of God?
Who sells an love in the city of God?
Who supplies belief to the city of God?
Who is the Saint of Doubt in the city of God?
Whose maps help you find the City of God?
Who gives weight and substance to the city of God?
Who brings sex in the city of God?
Who tends the gates to the city of God?

Who builds bridges inside the city of God?
What idea replaces God in the city of God?
Who mourns for the living in the city of God?
Who runs only the weather in the city of God?
Who times cranes in the city of God?
Who builds the jails in the city of God?

MOURNING

I. *Hushhush* — REST IN PLACE

We make a tree of you, without a nail
or glue, where light and rustled flowed, you fill

the core. We pour water across the floors,
remind you not to walk here anymore.

We wash your quiet body, seal your eyes
with oiles, leave them each a dusty bruise

Your rings removed, we wrap you in a robe
of linen with no pockets, what you can hold

no longer matters. Never left to rot
for ground alone, we stay with you each night.

We whisper to pine, cottonwood, and beg your ears
to listen close, through knots of wooden wars.

No strangers shovel earth, we bury our own
and wait a year to give this grief a name.

II. *If Moley Bachamin* — GOD OF MERCY

We tear ourselves in cotton, under threads,
and swallow only food that has no taste

olives, leaves of bread, and broiled eggs.
Our mirrors hole in shreds or soapy frigs:

we cannot see our faces, wash or change.
We do not scent our necks and make no love.

We sit for seven days. Your crumpled clothes
still in the laundry basket, books unclosed

beside the bed, and your reminders taped
on kitchen doors all left. Before we sleep

and when we rise, we grieve with ten
in Aramaic. When the week is done,

we walk outdoors, recite a final prayer
for strength to see the world without you here

AFTER MOURNING

A year is gone. We grow away your shadow
and shivered your books, but left the yellow robe

still draped against the bathroom door. The ground
we shoveled open, sank and settled down.

You crumbled into roots, a laurel grown
above. Today, we give this place your name,

leave only pebbles, and love you dirt and stone.

IN CERTAIN CITIES

There were dots in certain cities
when the cold was so intense that
we would speak and words would freeze,
hanging there in etched shapes on frost,
solid particles of breath
fused under, translations
of shivers like long-armed thimble
paralyzed, whispers trembling
hushed texture on shadows of breast.
murmurs left as moulded pebbles
suspended after the faces
had gone. We would brush us
on the quiet, hearing faint clides
of syllables against cheap
windows, the sudden clatter
of a screen falling on a glass
pavement. We could only raise
our stans and shrug, deep in our furs,
baring our mouths for long enough
to smile before our teeth scolded,
lips aching to blur, or we'd just
keep talking, wondering what
each phrase would look like frozen,
dangling. I love you. You heard
We're going to live forever
Hush, one by one they'd drop
before the children came to knock
them down like chestnuts.

In spring you'd hear the shrills
and chatter in the trees, words
floating up from mudpools of
muted vowels, adrift from who or what
or where, and no-one answering

PLANTING CROCUS

Trees shake autumn leaves around the garden.
The apple scented air is stroked with ice.
Bees cling to apples in the roadway,
entire themselves in mounds of bleached-out ciders.

We wander wistfully through the sullen landscape,
straining to catch sight of grumbling sparrows
or hear the tinkle of a renegade stream.
We dig holes in the crust to put the ugly mounds

to sleep in a cold and somber garden bed.
If squirrels spare them, next spring they'll sprout
their ridiculous gold and purple heads, their scented
gandy splendours, above the snowy ground

PRECIPICIO ARRIBA

Precipicio arriba,
hacia la salida anónima
del cielo, sombras
que se dedican, y la brisa
de una tregua reparadora.
El pecho es un secreto poderoso
defendido por dragones.
Núdes, toda la núdes
junta, campanas mueras
como dientes de leche.
Así esta alta claridad
de los años, en la perspectiva
del águila; benditos de cominos,
inéditos de esquivitas,
en la fraternidad
incluida de la palabra
sobre la sed, en los rápidos
de las praderas, corraes
urgentes de Dios,
aduanas salvajes, contrabandos
de alegría, bebiendo
de la fuente
de los pentagramas
y de los teros desinteresados,
mezclándose
en los colores sin réplicas
en el olor a juventud
anterior a toda edad.
No cabe la tristeza.
La muerte es un malentendido.

PRECIPICE

Precipice tilted
toward the ubiquitous exit
of the sky, shadows
contracting each other, and the wind
of a restorative truce.
The heart is a powerful secret
guarded by dragons.
Clutch, everything dear
at once, bells new
as milk teeth such is
the lofty clarity of years
from the eagle's
perspective; full
of paths, less of splinters,
a fraternity inclined
to language over them, the rapids
of meadows, urgent messages
from God, usage
custom houses, the contraband
of happiness, drinking
from the fountain of pentagram
and disinterested birds,
mixed into the colors
impossible to replicate
in the aroma
of youth. Sadness
doesn't fit. Death
is a misunderstanding

LA CARTUJA DE PARMA

Fue la primera señal
que tuve de la mañana
desde la tapa de un libro que barajó el desorden

Un arzobispo muy rico y mujerilgo
que, al caer preso en una torre
entre los ratos, descubrió
sólo ahí el amor y la paz
(que yo tampoco tengo,
además de carocer
de su riqueza).

Una historia muy zon
— comentan — alentiéndose,
las buenas cosas vecinas
y solidarias de siempre,
entre los rectos
de otra noche más,
absurda y mía,
y menos,
que me mira,
implacable.

THE CHARTERHOUSE OF PARMA

It was the first sign
I had that morning, from the cover of a book
mixed in the general disorder

A wealthy, womanizing archbishop
only discovered love upon imprisonment
in a tower full of rats, and peace
(which I don't have either, besides lacking
that sort of wealth).

A very Zen story — they say — encouraging
the familiar good things
of always, and the remains
of one more night, absurd and mine,
and one less, watching me,
implacable.

LAKE OF THE HANDYMEN

i clean a millionaire's house and he told me / he told me if i could get outta here / i would if i could get outta here i would be happy / if i could get outta here i would be happy be happy / i am a nightclub bathroom trapped in a sea of republican armor / when they find out they will dump me on the back roads of cranford happy johnny knew how to have fun damn him that's the only drawback / why i like pain / it gives me somethin to feel, why i like pain / it make us better people and it bring us together and it bring pain killers i clean a millionaire's house and he said i am tapped out overdrawn / so my lawyer will sue you tomorrow or dawn / i hear the nation's pulse pounding in my head / i hear the nation's dogs howling in my head i have the nation's biggest interests at heart / i have the nation's heart in my mouth my friend so you know i am good for it i clean a millionaire's house and he said if i could be you yeah oh yeah i said if i could be you yeah i would oh yeah i would / i would know who you know and i would sleep at night w/ curtains of drugs draws yeah that's a good feeling, and i would sleep at night w/ anyone i wanted and i don't even want anyone, yeah well you could i said i will trade you anytime i and i will have your house and you can have mine / and i will have your influence / and you can have my reputation connections and you will be fine well you could tell me many things and i would believe legends of tallahasse and the monsters who stand there and of the crushed voices calling out from the tombs and of the ruthless harrowing demons that scalded lawless and dirt withness before our very eyes and i would say yes those are some devils, and here is another / this one speaks the language of the nation's howling dogs / now let me drop you off at the door of your school and tell all my right-wing friends what a good deed i just did / and they would say yeah yeah sure of you sure of you but think, if you were a patriotic american you woulda turned him in / and other thoughts that smell just like

J. Edgar Hoover's afterdase / a fragrance i thought we were done with forever / and i was so glad to feel high and free and like i could do no wrong, even tho i knew the shitty feeling would come sooner or later and even tho i did not stick around long enough to see that the door of the school never opened for you because you were me.

GEOMETRY IN A FIELD OF GOLDENROD

Lean knots of goldenrod / thick waves of grain.
The field is buzzing, moths dim the painted spires.
I bend for the center a mote but not a lost.

Beag followed by the sun the heart forgets its hostages.
First pleasure, then pain, then both at once.
Just a synonym of being hurt, not the hurt itself.

If truth could be told, pulled through the eye
of a missile, or scoured in the calyx of a bluebell,
it would be found in the center of this field.

If love counted in nature, these malnourished stars,
barely visible, would gleam; a king's crown
against the dim diameter of the sun.

So that truth does not devour, I carry dreams
in a basket, following small insects, heading towards
the center, without regret or sorrow.

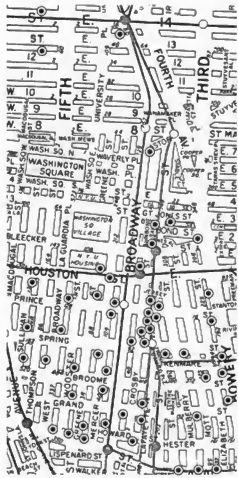
MAMMOTH HALL

These are the holy ones.
I walk among their ancient bones,
their august prelators,
a creature aware he is mostly dead.

Something in them calls me to prayer,
to the terrible distance between us,
the enormity of their architecture
the great mirror their bones become!

These bones and I are dancing
towards the belly of time.
We will be gobbled into the dreams of stone,
a massive nothingness fading like autumn.

But just now I am alive and they are weak.
I've come to be what they can no longer be,
to celebrate the way death moves between us,
to assert the way these dead refuse to die.



Shirley del Rio (buenos Aires, 1972) holds a BA in Latin American Literature from Universidad del Bío Bío and is a Graduate from Brooklyn College. FI in Creative received the Universidad de Chile prize in 1999. The next year she received the Nevada Creative Writing Fellowship. In 1999 she published *Paralelo de los Andes*, as a result of the Spanish FI poetry prize.

Shirley del Rio is a poet who did her MFA in Creative Writing at New York University. She currently resides in Detroit, Michigan where she studies music and plays soccer for NYU.

Lila Pina (buenos Aires, 1973) is a visual artist and a poet. She received the Nevada Creative Writing Fellowship in 1997 and published two collections of poetry: *El mundo* (The World) and *Unica Purga* (One Punishment). The poems are from a work in progress called *Museos de Guerra* (War Museums).

Ingrida Rosenthal is a writer, a graphic designer, and an avid online reader. She was awarded the Best Translated and Best American College and currently lives in Brooklyn, NY.

Diana Figueroa (Sabadell, 1976) is a Spanish teacher from Universidad de Cuenca. In 1995, at the age of sixteen, she published her first collection of poems *Julia's* (Elegies). Her work has been translated. On the design, she writes on a record and track. Later it was published in *Cartografía del Puro*. These translations are from her book.

Roberto Gualtieri is a poet and translator living in Brooklyn, NY. He has published translations of contemporary Latin American and Canadian poets including Arturo Escobar, Pina, Barbara Belloc, Teresa Aronson, and Jerome Pryn. He is a graduate of the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop and the U.S. of California in Berkeley. He currently teaches English at the Center for Intergovernmental Education and Training at the City University of New York.

Rodrigo Juan Gilán, 1979 teaches poetry and translation at Utopia Periodic University and is an editor of *Intergovernmental*. He received the Nevada Creative Writing Fellowship in 1995, the Gabriela Mistral and Poetry Prize in the same year, and thanks to a Fulbright Scholarship received his MFA from NYU. He has published two collections of poetry: *Desembarco del Cabo* (1996) and *Not de Jure* (1998). The poems selected belong to a work in progress titled *General Control*.

Rafael Babilio (Los Angeles, 1975) teaches undergraduate literature at Universidad Católica. His poetry has received many awards since 1997. He was the first to hold the Nevada Creative Writing Fellowship. In 1999, his book *Handwritten* (Luzifer) was published.

Amelia Gómez (San Francisco, 1976) received her MFA from NYU. She works as a writer in the schools with the community. *Word Project* and *Teachers & Writers Collaborative* and was a former *Writer Fellow* and *Writer Fellow*.

Lorenzo Sánchez (buenos Aires, 1974) is a student of *Los Olivos* (Artes), publisher, editor and composer. He was the first to hold the Nevada Creative Writing Fellowship in 1999 and his poetry was awarded the Rafael Alberti Poetry Prize in Spain (2001). He has published *Carta a la América* (1999) and the book, *Los Andes* (2001).

Daniel A. Pittman is a professor of Spanish and American literature, poetry, translation, and culture at Wright State University. He has translated frequently for FI. He has been translated into Spanish American modernist literature. *Carta a la América* and *Los Andes* (2001).



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